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GENDER PLAN

USAID/ALL CHILDREN READING

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DISCLAIMER

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

ACRONYMS

ACR	All Children Reading
ARED	Associates in Research and Education Development
AME	<i>Associations des Mères d'Elèves</i>
USAID/AT-PNLSen	<i>Programme de l'USAID pour l'Assistance Technique au Programme National de Lecture du Sénégal</i>
CCIEF	Coordination of Girls' Education Interventions
CGE	<i>Conseils de Gestion de l'Ecole</i>
CREM	<i>Concours de Recrutement des Elèves-Maîtres</i>
CRFPE	<i>Centre régional de Formation de Personnel de l'Education</i>
DEEG	<i>Direction de l'Equité et de l'Egalité de Genre</i>
DRH	<i>Direction des Ressources Humaines</i>
DRTS	<i>Division Radio Television Scolaire</i>
EDB	<i>Education de Base Project</i>
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EPQ	<i>Éducation Priorité Qualité</i>
ESSP	Electricity Sector Support Project
GOS	Government of Senegal
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
IA	<i>Inspecteurs d'Academies</i>
HICD	<i>Human and Institutional Capacity Development</i>
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IEF	<i>Inspection de l'Education et de la Formation</i>
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices
LEMA	Local Education Monitoring Approach
MEN	<i>Ministère de l'Education National</i>
MFPA	<i>Ministere de la Formation Professionnelle, de l'Apprentissage et de l'Artisanat</i>

PAEF	<i>Project d'appui a l'éducation féminine</i>
PAEM	<i>Projet d'Appui à l' Enseignement Moyen</i>
PAQUET-EF	Le Programme d'Amélioration de la Qualité, de l'Équité et de la Transparence du secteur de l'Éducation et de la Formation
PASEC	<i>Programme d'analyse des systèmes éducatifs de la confemen</i>
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Study
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SBCC	Social Behavior Change Communications
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SNEEG	<i>Stratégie Nationale pour Equité et l'Egalité de Genre</i>
SMC	School Management Committee
SRGBV	School-related gender-based violence
TOR	Terms of Reference
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

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I. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

A. USAID/ACR Program Background

The Senegal All Children Reading (ACR) Activity, known in French as the program of USAID/*Assistance Technique au Programme National de la Lecture* (USAID/AT-PNLSen), is funded by USAID and implemented by Chemonics International and its consortium of partners in support of the Senegalese National Reading Program led by the *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale* (MEN). USAID/ACR began at the end of October 2016 and runs through July 10, 2021, aiming to improve reading levels for students in Grades 1-3 through an effective, sustainable and scalable national program. This technical assistance program targets three outcomes to achieve this goal: early grade reading instruction in public primary schools and *daaras* improved, delivery systems for early grade reading instruction improved, and parent and community engagement in early grade reading improved. Children will be learning to read in one of three national languages depending on their school: Wolof, Pulaar, or Serer. Under the current planning, the program will work in four regions, Fatick, Kaolack, Kaffrine, and Matam in Year 1; and in Year 3 it will add Louga and Diourbel to cover seven regions.

B. Rationale for Senegal USAID/ACR Gender Plan

Gender is a key cross-cutting issue. Per the USAID/ACR contract, in order to ensure that all students, girls and boys alike, benefit from program interventions, gender equality must be integrated into activities and throughout program implementation. Therefore, it is vital that USAID/ACR develop and implement a gender plan that reaches all aspects of the project and instill gender equality throughout each level to achieve long lasting and sustainable impacts.

In addition to USAID's initiative and shared guidance documents, specifically the *USAID Guide for strengthening gender equality and inclusiveness in teaching and learning materials* (RTI, 2015) referenced extensively in this document, the Government of Senegal has also endorsed the need for gender equality. The government of Senegal has subscribed to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which include gender equality. Gender equality in education has proven impacts on many other SDGs, such as economic growth, health, nutrition and agricultural productivity (Global Partnership for Education, 2016a). The Government of Senegal has developed policies which endorse gender equality in education specifically (*Ministère de la Femme, de la Famille et du Développement Social*, 2015 ; "Plan de responsabilisation," 2014).

While much progress has been made in recent years in terms of enrolling girls in school, much remains to be accomplished so that all elementary age school children – both girls and boys – can read at grade level and grow up to be healthy productive citizens. Assessments based on the *Stratégie Nationale pour Équité et l'Égalité de Genre* (SNEEG) of 2013 found that gender inequality remains a pressing concern in Senegal (*Ministère de la Femme, de la Famille et de l'Enfance, République de Sénégal*, PPT).

With this rationale in mind, the objectives in developing the gender plan were to: 1) meet requirements of USAID to promote gender equality; 2) to ensure that gender equality is comprehensively and thoroughly integrated in all aspects of USAID/ACR in order to improve the long-term outcomes and sustainability of the technical assistance.

To operationalize this plan, the USAID/ACR Gender and Inclusion Specialist will work with each Outcome Team Lead to implement agreed upon strategies and proposed actions under each of the three program Outcomes:

Outcome 1: Early Grade Reading Instruction in Primary Schools and *Daaras* Improved

Outcome 2: Delivery Systems for Early Grade Reading Instruction Improved

Outcome 3: Parent and Community Engagement in Early Grade Reading Improved

This document is organized by outcomes and outputs to connect each gender dimension with a specific target area and planned activity. Gender issues at the individual, relational, community, and structural levels by their nature cut across these types of program outcomes and outputs and in some cases, affect multiple outputs. We also recognize that the USAID/ACR approach is to integrate gender into existing and planned activities. USAID/ACR will also work to address gender with *daaras* to the extent possible, with the understanding that this may be a more sensitive and difficult area to impact.

II. METHODOLOGY FOR DEVELOPING THE PLAN

The methods used to develop the gender plan included a literature review, key informant interviews, consultative meetings, and observations at school sites in April and May 2017. In April, EdIntersect Senior Gender Adviser Ms. Jill Gay and USAID/ACR Gender and Inclusion Specialist Ms. Rokhaya Diop worked side by side to meet with partners, stakeholders, Ministry of Education actors, school directors, teachers, *daara* instructors, and others. Ms. Rokhaya Diop administered questionnaires to respondents from parent and community groups and conducted interviews in Kaffrine and Kaolack. Ms. Diop also visited schools in rural areas and conducted interviews with IEF and teacher and community groups (See *Annex A Gender Plan Meetings*). The meetings and consultations helped inform the Gender Plan, specifically in understanding the work already underway by different partners in Senegal. The USAID/ACR strategy for gender will leverage these existing efforts to work in a complimentary way and strive to instill sustainable gender equality in early grade reading for the five years of ACR and beyond.

On May 24th, Ms. Diop met with the MEN and the *Cadre de Concertation et de Coordination des Interventions sur l'Education des Filles* (CCIEF) to validate the Gender Plan strategies outlined in this document. The MEN specifically commended the efforts made by the team to integrate gender into all aspects of program activities and to include all levels of actors. The plan was approved and validated by the MEN.

A. Review of relevant documentation

A thorough literature review took place, which included USAID reports; the Government of Senegal policies and report; project and peer-reviewed literature; relevant books and training modules of international NGOs; and materials produced by international development partners, such as UNICEF and CCIEF (Coordination of Girls' Education Interventions – of UN Women).

A list of reviewed documents is included in the bibliography.

B. Key informant interviews and consultative meetings

In April 2017, Rokhaya Diop, USAID/ACR Gender and Inclusion Specialist and Jill Gay, EdIntersect Senior Gender Adviser, led consultations in Dakar with USAID/ACR staff, Senegalese government officials, and relevant development partners. Ms. Diop also held consultations with ARED, the *Observatoire de Genre et Développement* in Saint Louis, and others. In May, Ms. Diop traveled to Kaffrine and Kaolack, and held sessions with the IEFs, gender bureau, school directors, teachers, various associations such as the female teachers' network, and parents who are members of *Associations des Mères d'Elèves* (AME) and *Conseils de Gestion de l'Ecole* (CGE) at schools and within communities.

C. Observations at school sites

During Ms. Gay's field visit in April 2017, Ms. Diop and Ms. Gay visited a public primary school and a private daara within Dakar to assess realities on the ground. Ms. Diop and Ms. Gay had a structured questionnaire (see Annex C) developed in consultation with Dr. Mount-Cors, EdIntersect Team Lead. During the observations in Dakar, Ms. Diop and Ms. Gay did spoke with students, teachers, administrators, and parents. The goal of these visits was to assess classroom dynamics, teacher interactions with students, number of girls and boys in the classroom, teacher behavior toward girls and boys (for example, if girls were called on more often than boys), teacher attitudes toward gender roles, and the overall conditions of the school environment. Following the departure of Ms. Gay from Senegal, Ms. Diop visited schools outside of Dakar, including Taiba Mbadianène School in Maléme and Hodar School in Kaffrine.

III. RECENT RESEARCH, SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT OF GENDER ASPECTS OF USAID/ACR

Part III comprises three sections, Section A, which addresses the general situational analysis of gender as it relates to early grade reading in Senegal; Section B, which addresses assessment of gender aspects related to the components of the USAID/ACR program, and Section C, which addresses Senegalese policy and plans addressing these gender issues.

A. General Situational Analysis of Gender as Relates to Early Grade Reading in Senegal

This situational analysis is based on a review of relevant research and in-country field research. Consultations in Senegal informed our understanding of the potential and existing gender issues in early grade reading in public school and daara classrooms in Senegal. In Senegal, 59% of girls are literate by age 15 as compared to 74% of boys (UNICEF, Senegal, 2016b). This is an important statistic to set the stage for this general analysis. Fewer teachers of primary school students are female, and fewer older siblings who are female are available and able to help younger siblings learn to read. Each of these factors is a catalyst for growth in reading scores for children and is missing, to some extent, in communities and families in Senegal. In this

section, we consider the situation in Senegal regarding the following key components of education and early grade reading: access, academic performance, grade repetition and dropout rates, teachers, parents, families, and communities.

1. Access to primary school

The government of Senegal, together with development partners, has made significant progress in increasing the number of girls entering elementary school. Between 2005 and 2011, primary school enrollment rates soared from 79% to 93%, with a higher number of girls enrolling than boys (USAID, 2014; UNICEF Senegal, 2016b). There are concerns however, that previous initiatives on promoting girls' access to education have contributed to boys falling behind: in 2004, girls made up 79.6% and boys 81.2% of elementary school students, but by 2015, girls constituted 92.2% and boys only 81% (PASEC, 2016). This data however, shows that boys' enrollment rates simply stayed the same at 81% while girls' enrollment rose. This data shows the need to focus attention on both boys' and girls' enrollment rates in lieu of one over the other.

While public primary education carries no cost officially, going to school does constitute an investment for the family. Families must purchase school supplies, such as pens and paper, uniforms, and ensure that their student has lunch or lunch money. When parents have to make choices about who receives these school-related items, they typically favor the chances of education for a boy. School related gender-based violence is also an issue in Senegal which affects girl's access to education. The Government of Senegal and development partners such as UNICEF and others, are working on initiatives to reduce school gender-based violence. Access to education is also made more difficult for girls when school conditions and school environments are unsafe. As noted by UN Women, "...The absence of female models of success (particularly in rural areas where the majority of teachers are men) ...early pregnancies and sexual abuse as well as the mandated silence around the taboo of sexual abuse, also limits the access of girls to school" (CCIEF, 2012). Girls in Senegal suffer from a number of forms of violence, including on their way to school, in their homes and communities, as well as within school (CCIEF, 2012).

2. Academic performance of girls and boys

To achieve gender equality, both boys and girls need to learn to read, do well in school, and have equal opportunities. If girls are not called on during class, if teachers promote gender stereotypes and do not understand the critical contribution to a family, to a community, and to the workforce a literate girl and literate woman make, then gender equality will not be achieved.

While access to education has increased markedly over the past decade, only 13% of students in Senegal have comprehensive reading skills (Jangandoo, 2017). In the most recent PASEC (2016) evaluation in Senegal, which tests students in 6th grade, boys performed better than girls in reading in the Northern region and the Central region, but were on par in reading scores in the Western region and the Southwest regions of Senegal.

It is perhaps important to note that in developed countries globally, boys tend to perform worse than girls in reading scores throughout early education (Brown Center on Education Policy, 2015; OECD, 2015). In secondary school, the gender gap stays constant and neither increases nor decreases (Brown Center on Education Policy, 2015; OECD, 2015). Research on this issue has included looking at how much of this gender gap can be attributed to teachers holding attitudes that reading is for girls and other gender-role stereotypes rather than gender equitable beliefs and practices (Wolter et al., 2015). In addition, parental and societal attitudes have been investigated and shown to be highly important to gender and learning (OECD, 2015). It has also been noted that boys may have different learning needs than girls in learning to read and their slower developmental cycle has been cited and studied in relationship to reading progress (Price-Mohr & Price, 2016). It is important to place gender differences in reading scores in larger perspective so that critical, potentially connected elements within a society or culture or within the education system itself are not missed in unpacking the determinants surrounding reading growth. What happens in the classroom is greatly impacted by the society at large and cannot be divorced from larger societal gender norms.

Gender norms are also a contributing factor to gender inequality in the classroom, for example boys belonging outside playing soccer and girls belonging inside the home with domestic tasks, with more limited mobility: “Girls and women disproportionately bear the burden of household chores, including time-consuming tasks such as collecting water and firewood, even while in school” (UNESCO, 2016, p. 37). Consultations in Senegal revealed examples such as: when a boy helps with household tasks, he is teased for his lack of masculinity. Likewise, gender norms are reflected in the classroom, discouraging girls from education, particularly in rural areas (Sow, 2016), which is where 55% of the Senegalese population lives (PASEC, 2016).

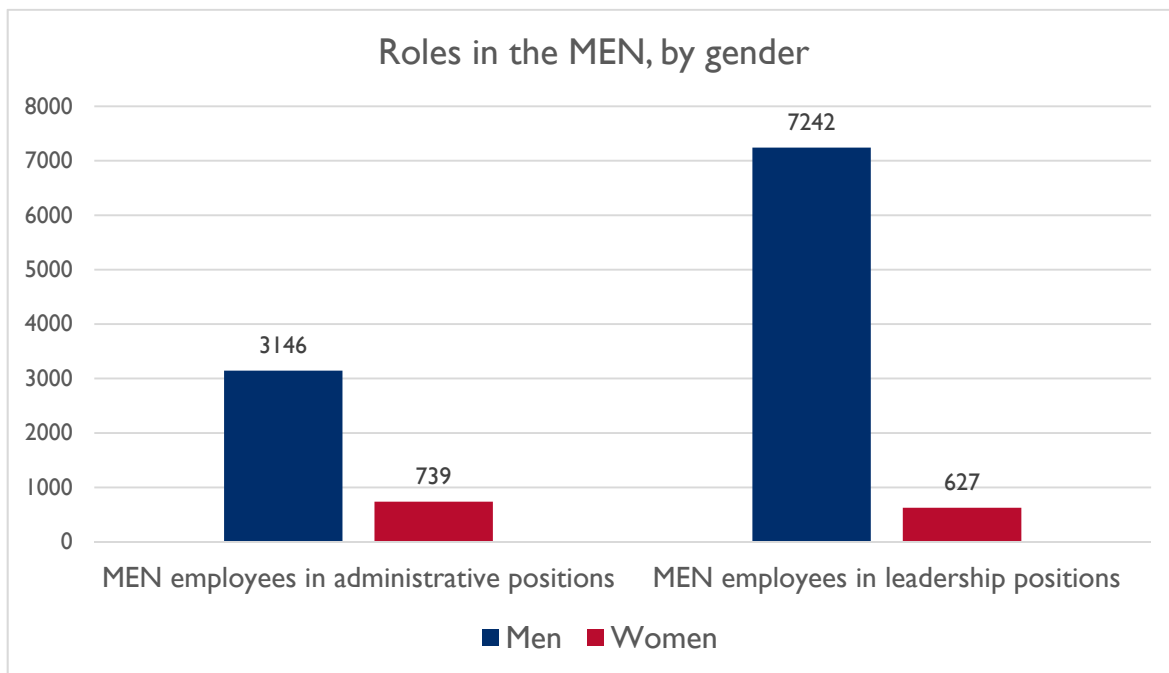
3. Grade repetition and dropout

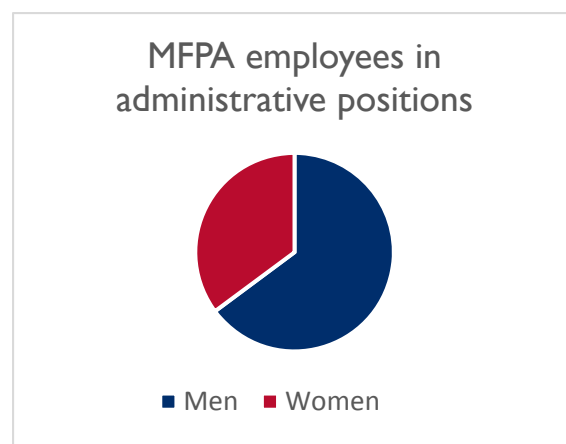
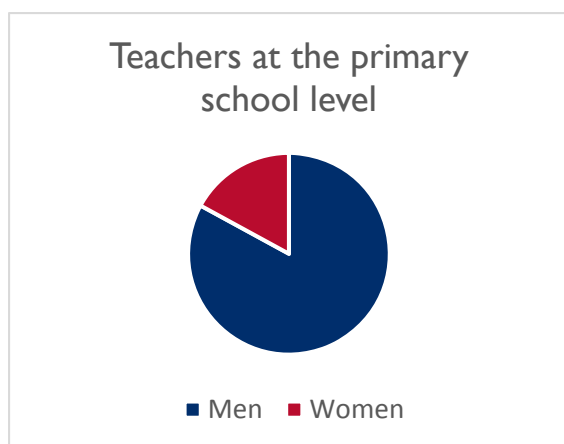
In Senegal, on average, almost 37% of students have repeated a grade by the end of primary school (PASEC, 2016). From 2009 through 2014, after gender parity in primary enrollment increased following the SCOFI project’s push for girls’ enrollment, the dropout and grade repetition rates stayed relatively stable. Girls and boys show similar rates of dropout and repetition, with boys having a slightly higher rate of primary dropout (PASEC, 2016). When looking at the dropout rates by region or district, some gender differences arise; for example, of those who repeat first grade in Diourbel, 16.5% are boys and 19.2% are girls (IA, 2015). It is important to pay attention to the gendered environment within the classroom and the school, and the factors that may push a girl out of school, especially an over-age student in the early grades who may reach puberty before her classmates. With 37% of primary students repeating a grade, there will be students over age for their grade in each class, and these over age students also have poorer performance on average in reading.

Girls dropping out of school also leads to fewer female teachers. Indeed, girls and young women drop out of the educational system especially due to gender norms that lead to marriage at young ages, pregnancies at young ages, and fewer income-generating opportunities for women. Recent data from a study by UNFPA and *Groupe pour l’Etude et l’Enseignement de la Population* (2016) found almost 1,162 adolescent pregnancies of girls aged 13 to 19 over the course of the 2015-2016 school year.

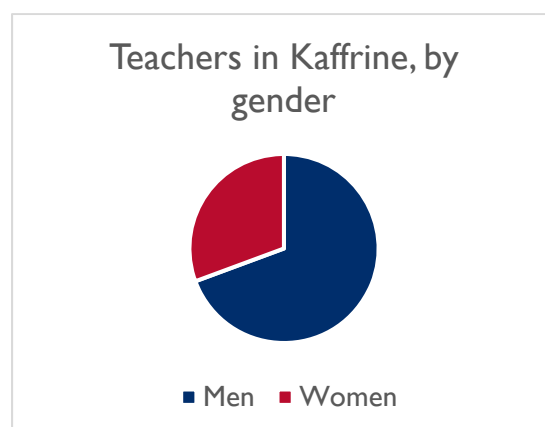
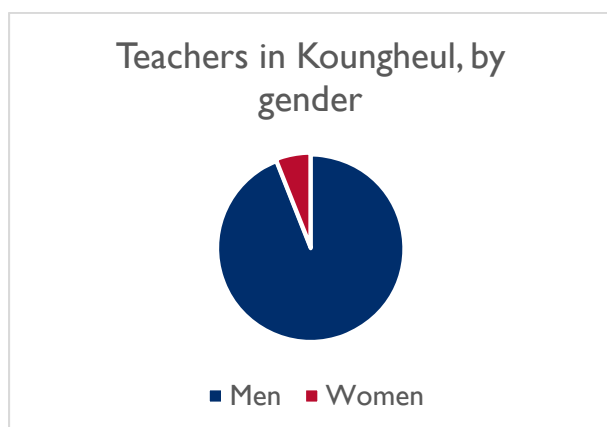
4. Teachers

According to a survey in October 2014 conducted by Coordination of Girls' Education Interventions – of UN Women (CCIEF) and *Projet d'Appui à l'Enseignement Moyen* (PAEM) funded by USAID, and *Éducation Priorité Qualité* (EPQ) funded by USAID, there is a stark gender imbalance in the number of female teachers at the primary level – 79 women compared to 384 men. Having female teachers is especially important for girls, as female teachers serve as role models and can serve as a catalyst to keeping girls in school. Men also fill a majority of the administration positions within the Ministry of Education (MEN): 739 women compared to 3,146 men in administrative positions at the MEN; and 64 women compared to 118 men in administrative positions at the *Ministère de la Formation Professionnelle, de l'Apprentissage et de l'Artisanat* (MFPA). Girls can be encouraged to pursue their education by having female teachers as a role model but females are markedly disadvantaged in the teaching profession. In leadership positions, this same survey showed that there were only 627 women in posts of responsibility compared to 7,242 men (MEN, "Plan de responsabilisation," 2014), signaling a significant gender inequality in positions of authority and teaching. A final report on USAID's EPQ work noted, "In general, teacher assignments and transfers in the Ministry of Education tend to be biased against women" (RTI, 2014, p.12)





Among the relatively small number of female teachers in Senegal, they are more likely to teach the early grades overall. In rural areas however, there are very few teachers who are female in the early or later primary grades. According to the IEF of Kounghoul, only 6% of teachers are female in this area. According to the IEF office of Mbirkilane, there are three female employees out of a total of 18 posts, and all *chefs de bureau* are men (Diop, 2017). According to the IEF of Kaffrine there are 891 teachers there. Out of that total number, 618 are men and 273 are women. Nineteen staff work in the IEF office and out of those positions, only four are held by women. In contrast, in a recent survey conducted by USAID/ACR, out of 57 teachers in Kaolack, 32 were women. Therefore, it will be important to assess in which area served by USAID/ACR the lack of female teachers is most salient.



A 2016 report from the Ministry of Education states that 30.4% of teachers in public schools are women (MEN, 2016). However, in Kaffrine, an example of where USAID/ACR will be active, only 25.9% of teachers are women. In the early grades of primary school, female teachers teach 52% of students, but by the end of primary school, 88% of students have had a male teachers (PASEC, 2016). Only 6.2% of students in Senegal attend a school directed by a woman (PASEC, 2016). Senegal is not alone: “Gender-equitable leadership is a major concern in

education. Women continue to be under-represented in senior management positions, on schools boards and in education ministries in rich and poor countries alike” (UNESCO, 2016, p.43). Additional research also notes the distinct disadvantages faced by female teachers, such as sexual harassment, being passed over from promotions and the conflicts faced by working mothers globally between competing demands for caregiving of one’s own family compared to paid employment (Les Assises de L’Éducation, 2014).

5. Parents, communities, and family obligations

Prevailing gender norms in Senegal stipulate that men’s role in the education of their children is simply to pay fees, rather than to encourage their child’s learning or to practice reading with their child, either inside the school setting as a volunteer or at home. Men’s participation in children’s reading is critical as more men than women are literate in Senegal and thus better equipped to assist and teach their children. As mentioned above, in Senegal, 59% of girls are literate by age 15 as compared to 74% of boys (UNICEF, Senegal, 2016a). Literacy rates also tend to correlate with socioeconomic status, in that more affluent geographic areas tend to have higher levels of literacy. Household surveys demonstrate that in Senegal, the richest women in the wealthiest areas of Senegal, such as Thies, have much higher literacy rates than the most vulnerable low-income females in Tambacounda (UNESCO, 2016). While women’s literacy rates are markedly lower than men’s on average in the country, prevailing gender norms stipulate that women are responsible for how well their children perform in school. Not only are women less equipped to provide their children with assistance and to practice reading with their children, but women are seen as responsible for all domestic chores, leaving them also less time than men in the home to devote to assisting their children to learn to read (Sow, 2016).

Gender norms also stipulate that girls are required to assist their mothers in domestic chores, such as collecting and carrying water, preparing food for family meals, cleaning, taking care of siblings, etc. leaving less time for girls to read and study. Children working, even in limited amounts, adversely impacts a child’s learning (Jha and Pouezevara, 2016). In the PASEC study (2016), doing work outside of school had a markedly negative association with reading scores. Girls and women are also charged with fetching water for drinking, cooking, and bathing in Senegal where the mean walk time is 19 minutes each way to the water source (Pickering & Davis, 2012). This means that girls and women are spending a significant part of each day fetching water for their families. This chore also requires a lot of energy leaving girls and women tired and with little energy for school work and reading. This daily habit may also indicate an absence in commitment from the family for the girl’s reading progress and lack of understanding of the importance of literacy.

Senegal still has significant levels of female genital mutilation (FGM), with over 12% of girls under the age of 14 having experienced FGM and over 15% of people supporting the practice of FGM (UNICEF, Senegal, 2016b). FGM is a hallmark of gender inequality and has been linked to factors inhibiting girls attending school. Through the work of Senegalese civil society organizations, such as Tostan, and others, the rates of FGM are going down, showing that gender norms are changing over time and becoming more equitable. In consultations for this gender plan held in Kaolack and Kaffrine, the *Association des Meres d’Élèves* expressed interest in

receiving gender training by USAID/ACR. This interest shows that women want to learn more about gender and how their own lives and the lives of their children can be improved with this type of empowerment.

B. Assessment of Gender Aspects Related to the Components of USAID/ACR

Gender aspects related to Outcome 1: Early Grade Reading Instruction in Primary Schools and Daaras Improved

The gender dimension within Outcome 1 relates primarily to the training and support of teachers and coaches (Output 1.2 & 1.3), and the teaching, learning and reading materials to be developed or acquired (Output 1.1).

Output 1.1: Evidence-based early grade reading materials in Senegalese languages provided

Reading materials are a fundamental tool to promote gender equality within education: “Interventions that promote gender equality and reading skills are mutually reinforcing” (USAID, 2012, p.27). However, findings of a 2007 UNESCO study indicate that gender bias in textbooks is a serious and prominent issue. Studies from developing and developed countries find that females tend to be greatly underrepresented in texts, and both males and females are depicted in gender-stereotypical ways. Gender bias in formal curricula can result in girls being steered toward gender-stereotyped courses of study. By developing new reading materials with gender equitable content, we can increase children’s literacy while also promoting gender equality. For example, when girls and boys are referenced, they should be depicted in a variety of ways, avoiding stereotypes of gender roles often ascribed to girls and boys. Gender-equitable materials would, therefore, show girls playing sports, excelling in math or science, aspiring to a full range of professions, as well as doing more traditional activities such as care giving, domestic chores, etc. Conversely, images and stories about boys would depict a range of activities from taking care of children, enjoying reading, doing domestic chores, etc. Teaching and learning materials can either reinforce gender stereotypes that exist in the larger community, or they can transform them by providing girls and boys with a more expansive view of what they can do and who they can be (USAID, 2011).

A review of current reading materials for early primary public schools and daaras in Senegal found that while some gender-responsive illustrations showed both girls and boys studying, other illustrations showed boys dreaming of fishing and being productive, while girls were shown dreaming of cooking. This review also found instances of stories that perpetuate social norms that do not promote a more equitable outlook. For example, a script on “Long live vacation,” where the text states, “Boys should help their fathers in the fields, and girls should help their mothers at home.” Such messages discourage girls from pursuing roles or careers in agriculture. Again, while this is the current reality for many, this gives no role models for girls to have activities outside the domestic sphere. In addition, women in Senegal have extensive roles in agriculture, so the absence of women discussed or seen in these roles in printed materials belies women’s role and importance. Gender inequitable reading materials were found both within public schools and within daaras (see *Annex B* for illustration examples).

Output 1.2: Teachers' skills in evidence-based early grade reading instruction improved

When thinking about training for teachers that enables both female and male teachers to improve their reading instruction skills, it is important to think about the different societal pressures and conditions women and men face. It is important to remember that when a girl has a female teacher, this person serves as a role model and encourages girls to stay in school and contribute to the workforce. A female teacher is also a strong role model to boys and shows the importance of women in society. Female teachers, holding professional positions alongside men, serves as an example of gender equity.

Teacher recruitment for female teachers remains problematic. In order to become a primary school teacher, applicants must pass the *baccalaureate* exam and hold this degree in addition to passing a CREM exam (*Concours de Recrutement des Elèves-Maîtres*). In 2016, the pass rate for the *baccalaureate* was 36.6%, with males passing at a higher rate (35.81%) compared to females (28.55%). In Kaolack, according to the director of the Teacher Training School (*Centre régional de Formation de Personnel de l'Education (CRFPE)*), there were 205 men studying to be teachers but only 58 women studying to be teachers in 2016. Given that the push to accelerate the numbers of girls in schools is more recent, there are still fewer young women who have graduated with the *baccalaureate*.

Marriage and pregnancy at a young age also have an impact on women taking part in the teaching profession. The rates of adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 who are in a partnership, either marriage or civil union, is 23%. Eighteen percent of women in Senegal have a child before the age of 18 (UNICEF, 2016d). Therefore, many women with the potential of becoming teachers already have families and children and are not as mobile as men. Particularly in the first years of teaching, teachers are expected to be mobile and move to whichever post they are assigned to by the MEN. Based on consultations in the field, it was widely stated that gender norms stipulate that since men are the decision-makers for the family, their wives would follow them to wherever they are posted, and not the other way around.

Gender norms that disadvantage women teachers are reinforced by the MEN's system of requiring any new teacher to be posted anywhere in Senegal during the first five years of teaching, with no exceptions. While this system enables the Senegalese Ministry of Education to post teachers where they are most needed, it also means that women are often forced to choose between teaching and being posted far away from their husbands, children, and families. If a woman accepts a teaching post away from her husband, her husband is also more likely to acquire an additional wife, leaving the woman disadvantaged. At an Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) instrument pilot in March 2017, the team encountered a female primary teacher who had been posted in Mbour with her husband who was a high school teacher. This is a positive example of ways in which the ministry can encourage female employment in teaching while accommodating family unity. Given the previously mentioned constraints on women's time and their significant role in the household, women teachers may also be less available to attend trainings and professional development opportunities held outside of school boundaries and school hours.

Providing safe and gender-equitable environments for both teachers and students is also a relevant factor. As Jha and Pouezevara (2016) find, “Overwhelming evidence now emanates from different parts of the globe to suggest that schools and teachers tend to reinforce gender-loaded perceptions regarding the abilities of boys and girls.” McCracken et al. (2015) also suggests the importance of putting attention on this issue of gender stereotypes that are perpetuated by teachers. A logical correlation exists between safe environments and children’s inclination to stay in school, as well as parents’ willingness to send or continue sending their children, especially girls, to school, thereby increasing attendance and retention rates (USAID, 2012). The Progress in International Reading Study (PIRLS) 2006 International Report indicates that a safe and secure school environment is a key aspect of a positive learning environment and that across the 40 countries participating in the study, on average, there was a positive association between school safety and average reading achievement (USAID, 2012). Combining modules on reading instruction along with modules on gender-equitable classroom management will contribute to improved reading skills (USAID, 2011).

Teachers may be unaware that they are creating gender disparities among their students by what they expect from girls as compared to boys. For example, prioritizing whether girls or boys are called on, whether girls or boys must listen and whether girls or boys can ask questions (Jha and Pouezevara, 2016). While gender training for teachers is vital, it is also important for teachers to understand their own perceptions on gender and the roles of girls and boys in society and in the classroom. USAID notes that even when teachers do receive any gender training, most have not been trained in what gender means in their classroom and how to translate their knowledge on gender into classroom practices. Teachers may hold traditional views on gender that can impact the classroom (USAID, 2016d).

Output 1.3: Coaching and Supervision of early grade reading instruction improved

Output 1.4: Early grade reading assessment improved

As noted previously, there is a relatively low number of female teachers overall in Senegal. The same statistics were found to be true for supervisors and coaches in the education system and across the education sector at large.

Similarly, most EGRA assessors are men. Given literacy rates and levels of education among men and women in Senegal and in many countries where EGRA studies are done, this may not be surprising. In addition to level of education, men are generally more mobile and available to travel for data collection. Currently, there is no data suggesting any effects of the sex of an enumerator on the results of the child being tested. However, we will consider monitoring this and training enumerators on gender to ensure that girls and boys feel equally at ease when being tested.

Within Senegal, there is national-level data on reading through PASEC (2016). However, there is a lack of early grade reading assessments at each school, disaggregated by sex, which is essential to both assessing progress in reading for each child at each school and in assessing

gender-related disparities. Through EGRA studies and rolling assessment using LEMA (Local Education Monitoring Approach), USAID/ACR will be able to achieve improvements in early grade reading assessment and contribute to this data.

To monitor interactions and equity in the classroom, there are several tools that already exist, such as the RTI 2015 guide and tools developed by Dr. Mount-Cors and colleagues in Mali and Rwanda. These observation tools for reading and gender development in the classroom will be adapted and used as part of the rolling assessment/LEMA in Senegal. USAID/ACR staff, in collaboration with the Inspectors of Education of the MEN, will observe a number of classrooms to assess if teachers, for example, praise students to positively reinforce targeted behaviors and learning. It is also essential to have assessment results disaggregated by sex, in both public schools and daaras. So while data exists on a national level, having sex disaggregated data on a school-to-school basis will provide the information for gender analysis to see if gender disparities exist. These ongoing assessments will continue to inform USAID/ACR's interventions and gender activities in the classroom.

Gender aspects related to Outcome 2: Delivery Systems for Early Grade Reading Instruction Improved

Output 2.1: Coordination and communication about early grade reading increased

Output 2.2: National standards for early grade reading adopted and applied

In addition to the gender aspects mentioned in Output 1.2 above and section III.A.4, standards and policies encouraging females in the education sector are lacking. While a gender bureau exists at the MEN, there is little implementation of the gender mandate throughout the education sector. Further research into the coordination and communication about early grade reading and gender sensitivity will take place to strengthen and inform the recommendations and strategies for Output 2.1 and 2.2.

As mentioned previously, a lack of females in the teaching profession is an ongoing issue which could be addressed by developing new policies and communications on females as teachers. In some rural areas of Senegal, parents are discouraged from sending their daughters to school as there is a lack of female teachers, role models, and girls in schools. Having a female teacher can provide an inspiring role model for both girls and their parents, and may make a difference in reading scores for students. In addition, as mentioned before, having a female teacher may encourage girls to enroll, attend, persist, and excel in school.

Output 2.3: Research on early grade reading in Senegal produced and disseminated

Several studies outlined in the USAID/ACR-supported Research Agenda will assist with policy formulation that address in part gender considerations related to USAID/ACR's scope and objectives. The teacher mobility study, for example, may provide insights into where female teachers may be more mobile than men and vice versa and for what reasons. However,

Senegalese Family Code stipulates that the husband has the sole power to decide where a family and the children reside (Rubin et al., 2010). This greatly impacts the ability of women to be posted to rural areas as teachers, as women do not hold the power to decide where their family should live.

Output 2.4: Policies in support of evidence-based early grade reading instruction implemented

Output 2.5: Ministry of Education staff's performance of essential functions improved

While policies exist regarding teacher deployment, these have been gender blind and gender harmful as they do not take into account the reality of women who want to be teachers. Women cannot risk being posted for five years in an area where their husbands may not be able to follow them for example. Deployment policies also need to take into account language of teachers as USAID/ACR focuses on teaching reading in schools in three of the national languages.

For the performance of ministry staff and units, gender issues include understanding concepts of gender and implementation of gender-responsive mainstreaming. While excellent gender training exists, the MEN has no dedicated budget or implementation plan to carry out such trainings. Gender-awareness and relevant policies have been established to increase gender-equity in education but very little has been done to implement these policies.

Attention to school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) has led to discussions and incorporation of SRGBV into national policies and action plans, including codes of conduct. Unfortunately these policies have yet to be operationalized due to a lack of budget allocation. While outside the scope of the contract, school-related gender-based violence is a global concern and an issue in Senegal.

Gender aspects related to Outcome 3: Parent and Community Engagement in Early Grade Reading Improved

As mentioned above, lack of female teachers may be a barrier to girls' accessing education in Senegal, as it has been in other countries. The lack of female teachers is connected to the parent and community engagement aspects of USAID/ACR as well as the school-based aspects. Fewer female teachers are available to teach due to gender norms, such as marriage of adolescent girls and adolescent pregnancies, making it less likely for girls to graduate with a *baccalaureate* and compete in exams to become a teacher.

Women may also effectively become heads of households with limited financial resources when men leave them for other wives or other women. In addition, women in marriage may not control the income they earn, leaving the decision to pay for school fees and school supplies to men even when the child's mother is generating income. This situation can also impede the time women have to devote to helping their children to learn to read. This double disempowerment of a woman in marriage can then affect young children's learning potential

adversely.

The life cycle, especially for girls taking on adult responsibilities, can be quite compressed in Senegal, as in other countries with early marriage and early pregnancy. Therefore, a multi-generational approach is important so as not to miss the short window of early primary that the system has with early reading programs for intervening with one child in the classroom. A family and community literacy approach ensures that the mother (and father) – and all caregivers - can be engaged with her children as they move through primary grades and through the education system (Mount-Cors, 2016). The parent and community engagement initiatives of USAID/ACR will take these gender considerations into account as they work with parents and communities.

For all of these output areas in Outcome 3, gender issues are integrated and cross cutting and are therefore discussed together:

Output 3.1: Parent and community demand for high-quality early grade reading instruction increased

Output 3.2: Community based early grade reading activities implemented

Output 3.3: At-home support to early grade learners improved

Randomized studies have shown that community engagement with schools improved student learning, especially for girls, and can counter the effect of socioeconomic disadvantages on children's educational outcomes (Pradhan et al., 2014 cited in Sperling and Winthrop, 2016; McCracken et al. 2015). There is also a strong correlation between books at home, reading at home, and reading achievement (Dowd and Friedlander, 2016).

Gender roles at home were a big issue raised during consultations in various regions outside of Dakar. For example, girls being responsible for chores after school and therefore missing out on time their brothers have to do homework and read. Some families even said that chores, such as fetching water, were more important than girls attending school. The broaching of this needed cultural shift will require deeper investigation of the community itself into the time on various chores and gendered pursuits expected of each family member throughout the day. This type of community reflection is included in the gender equality guidance (Save the Children, 2014) mentioned as a good basis for staff, teachers, and also community training.

Output 3.4: Parent and community monitoring of early grade reading instruction delivery improved

Prevailing gender norms heavily impact the ability of children, particularly girls, to engage in learning to read: "Due to poverty, families may find the costs associated with going to school prohibitive (such as ...transport, food...) that make families choose to send their boys to school instead of their girls" (CCIEF, 2012, p.5). In addition, girls have many more domestic chores before and after school hours, and this makes practicing reading outside the classroom challenging. The amount of domestic work negatively impacts competence in reading for

children in Senegal (PASEC, 2016).

For the communication strategy with parents, USAID/ACR will consider some of the below key areas. It is crucial that parents understand the effect these home obligations and practices have on their children's reading progress.

- a) What are parents' expectations for their children's education? Does this differ by the sex of their child? *(Could be part of the parent and community research for behavior change campaign?)*
- b) What are expectations for girls and boys in terms of time for study as compared to time for household chores? *(Could be part of the parent and community research for behavior change campaign?)*
- c) What works to increase the motivation by both fathers and mothers to read to their children at home and have their children practice reading to them? What other supports do parents need to enable them to have the time and resources to read with their children? Does this differ by the sex of the child? *(Could be part of the parent and community research for behavior change campaign?)*

Another gender norm that impacts children's ability to read is that men's role is often viewed as only to pay for school fees, with a limited role in helping children learn to read at home or by being involved at school. Gender norms also dictate that women are seen as those responsible for ensuring that children get good grades in schools, yet women are less likely to be literate than men, given national male and female literacy rates, and have less time to spare for reading to their children.

Asking women who are not literate to teach their children to read may not be successful, but having female caregivers check that their child has completed homework or ensuring that their child reads for a requisite number of minutes at home can be quite effective. In addition, female caregivers learning alongside their children can also be quite powerful as well as helping women understand the importance of talking to their children in the national language about all activities they are undertaking in order to continue growing their child's receptive vocabulary. Having access to mobile or community libraries and also after-school clubs has also proven effective in increasing children's reading time and reading ability, with the guidance and support of their family and community members.

Parents through the AME and CGE may come to school and also assist in the classroom and ensure each student has a book to read. Complementing the 1:1 student/book ratio will be community-based dialogues that include school administrators on the importance of reading for both boys and girls, as well as the importance of each girl and each boy having a book to read. All of the following recommendations are specifically for gender and reading considerations. These are included as part of the thinking behind the criteria for choosing extracurricular books/managing community/ school-community libraries that will be covered in the Community Literacy Support Plan.

The below list constitutes evidence-based strategies for integrating gender into early grade reading programs and initiatives (adapted from Goouch and Lambirth, 2011):

1. Have taped stories on audio files that reflect the class. These could be dictated and recorded stories that the teacher writes down from students in the classroom.
2. Include some books that also use home dialects that may diverge somewhat from the national language standard structures used at school.
3. Include texts that will appeal to children from all socioeconomic levels and ethnolinguistic backgrounds.
4. While encouraging the reading of books and use of lending libraries, also consider the reading value of other devices and texts in the community as well: TV, CDs, games, phones, tablets, etc. that students may see or have access to.
5. Use texts that draw on popular and local culture – and could include comics and magazines alongside books.
6. Balance fiction and non-fiction. Do not assume gender bias in who likes which type of text.
7. Involve males and females from outside the school in literacy activities in the school from all socioeconomic levels in the community.
8. Involve older boys, older girls, fathers, mothers, community visitors both male and female in reading activities.
9. Encourage fathers and mothers to come to parent consultations with teachers.
10. Foster independence in reading with both boys and girls

C. Senegalese Policy and Plans Addressing these Gender Issues

I. Senegalese policies and plans related to gender and USAID/ACR

Numerous Senegalese policies exist that promote gender equality, both within society writ large and more specifically, within the education sector. The Preamble of the Constitution of Senegal recognizes equality of all citizens without discrimination by sex (Sow, 2016). Policies note the importance of girls' education, the need to reduce SRGBV, and to increase the numbers of women within the education profession. In *Le Programme d'Amélioration de la Qualité, de l'Équité et de la Transparence du secteur de l'Éducation et de la Formation (PAQUET-EF) Strategy 2013 - 2025*, the Government of Senegal has promoted the following priorities:

1. Gender equality within the education system
2. Ensure the access and success of girls
3. Combat school-related gender-based violence

(Ministère de la Femme, de la Famille et du Développement Social, 2015; MEN, "Plan de responsabilisation," 2014)

In regards to number one above and the deployment of female teachers as part of ensuring gender equality in the education system, some gains have been made, such as: promotion of female teachers into leadership positions of responsibility by granting of 5 bonus points,¹ reserving 10% of vacant positions for female teachers per academy/IEF in the so-called

¹ Bonus points are additional points in scoring for teachers to be awarded a teaching post.

"women's priorities" positions, training for female teachers appointed to leadership positions, and consideration of personal reasons for changing posts (spousal location, illness, etc.). Nonetheless, deployment of female teachers to teaching positions in rural areas is still an obstacle to overcome.

2. Gaps related to Senegalese policies and plans pertinent to gender and USAID/ACR

While significant progress has been made in Senegal in developing gender policies, several gaps remain. For example, the Ministry of Education, in charge of operationalizing the PAQUET-EF, has no funds and no system of accountability to ensure that the policies and strategy are implemented. The government has established appropriate policies reinforcing goals in education and gender, but there is little to no buy-in, particularly financially, to put these policies into practice.

As noted in the sub-section above, increasing the number of female teachers, their retention in the profession, and their promotion to leadership posts is an ongoing area of work for the Government of Senegal. Additionally, teacher pay and strikes (Ministère de la Femme, de la Famille et de l'Enfance et de l'Entrepreneuriat féminin et al., 2013) remain an issue in the educational system and USAID/ACR can encourage the Ministry of Education to increase teacher pay and benefits. On the whole, since women are in lower paid positions in education, unless women can rise in the educational system, their income earning potentials are limited. Strikes by teachers are an ongoing issue in Senegal, with parents referring to the numerous strikes as reasons to have their children go to private schools, including daaras, as compared to public schools. Strikes, due to low teacher pay, directly impact the ability of children to learn.

Another critical policy issue related to children's education is the potential for the abuse of children within daaras. While by no means a universal phenomenon within daaras in Senegal, a recent Human Rights Watch report (2014) has noted that in some daaras, boys do not get adequate class time and are merely used by their teachers as pawns to beg for money and food. In addition, it was noted that in some cases girls seem to be present just to provide housekeeping, such as cleaning the daara classrooms, and also go without adequate class instruction. USAID's Education de Base (EDB) Project also noted the need to mobilize against begging and violence within daaras (USAID, 2013b). The Senegalese government is in the process of codifying requirements by daaras to include adequate classroom instruction. The government should be encouraged to finalize this legislation, which has been in process since 2014. The challenge of daaras is made more difficult by the issue of itinerant leaders of daaras, who may come from other countries such as the Gambia and Guinea-Bissau. Operationalizing the policies related to adequate classroom time for children within daaras will be an ongoing challenge. The Senegalese government can mandate daaras to have standards of teacher qualifications and adequate time for instruction. USAID/ACR can model this requirement within the daaras selected by USAID/ACR. USAID/ACR can document the impact of these mandates for daaras on educational outcomes as a way to advocate for national scale-up.

As this gender assessment of Senegal notes, even though Senegal's policies promote gender equality, "it is also a challenging environment because gender inequalities persist" (Rubin et al.,

2010, p.10), with customary law still strong and implemented in rural areas. Women also have much greater domestic responsibilities (Rubin et al., 2010).

IV. USAID/ACR GENDER STRATEGY

Part IV presents the plan for addressing the gender issues raised in Part III and for ensuring that gender is taken into consideration in all aspects of USAID/ACR program design and implementation. This plan addresses strategies for each USAID/ACR Outcome area, passing then to cross-cutting components in Section D, which includes sub-sections on ICTs; Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning; and Program Reporting. Section E discusses the USAID/ACR Team Gender Approach and the emphasis on gender equality starting with team composition and commitment.

In general, gender-responsive interventions are needed at all levels: within public schools and daaras, for teachers, for students, for education officials (Outcome 1 and Outcome 2); in communities, for parents and other family members, and children/students within those home and community settings (Outcome 3).

To influence gender norms, interventions are needed at an individual level (for example, the student); within relationships (for example, between student and teacher; parent and student; student to student); at the community level (for example, through community dialogues on gender); and at the societal level (for example, through Senegalese national policies on gender). USAID/ACR will work to create gender-responsive interventions within all these levels and based on the socio-ecological model (Dahlberg and Krug, 2002). Relationships between boys and girls are at the core of addressing gender in reading and across the lifecycle. ACR's gender-sensitive programming will benefit girls and boys, as well as their parents, teachers, the educational system and the communities in which USAID/ACR will work. Programs and policies to improve girls' education have been shown to have a positive impact on boys (Global Partnership for Education, 2016a). Evidence-based programming has been incorporated into this Gender Plan, as recommended by USAID (USAID, 2012). Additionally, this Gender Plan recommends collaborative work with key partners to develop coordinated strategies to improve educational outcomes.). This plan also draws on relevant gender analysis conducted by other donors and NGOs (USAID, 2012).

USAID/ACR gender strategies outlined below are built on the premise that USAID/ACR staff and counterparts will need to first internalize gender awareness and sensitivity and then work to integrate gender into each aspect of the National Program for Reading. This approach will ensure gender-transformative programming at each level and across all outcomes. We also plan to regularly monitor and assess whether USAID/ACR staff and counterparts are increasing their own knowledge of gender and are instituting continual change and efforts toward overall gender equality.

USAID/ACR staff will create a Dropbox, accessible to all USAID/ACR staff and MEN staff that will include relevant gender documents in early education. The Dropbox will be organized so that all categories are clear and resources easily accessible. For example, categories might

include 1) Senegalese policies relevant to promoting gender equality in primary education; 2) USG requirements on gender, gender strategies relevant to education, and other USAID materials; 3) Recommended training materials; 4) Examples of gender transformative children's reading materials; etc.

Below, we detail our strategy and approach toward integrating gender into all outcomes and outputs of USAID/ACR.

A. Outcome 1: Early Grade Reading Instruction in Primary Schools and *Daaras* Improved

Output 1.1 Evidence-based early grade reading materials in Senegalese languages provided

The goal of our strategy for Output 1.1 is to promote gender sensitivity and equality in all reading materials and in their distribution.

USAID/ACR will ensure that the content, themes, and subtexts in the student tools, textbooks, and workbooks; teacher manuals; and supplemental readers we help procure or acquire promote gender equality between boys and girls and do not reinforce gender stereotypes. A critical part of learning to read and then reading to learn in school is the texts and materials put in children's hands. Indeed, "Textbooks and curricula matter not only for learning new information but also for what perceptions they create about women and their roles," with "study after study showing significant gender bias in textbooks, with women greatly underrepresented and both women and men depicted in gender-stereotyped ways" (Sperling and Winthrop, 2016, p.254). To the extent reasonable and in ways appropriate for very young learners, we will also help produce student materials and read-aloud texts that touch on safety and age-appropriate life skills, based on best practices (UNESCO & UN Women, 2016) (required for Output 1.1 per the USAID/ACR contract).

Activities under Output 1.1 will include:

- All materials developed with the support of USAID/ACR will be crafted or audited to ensure that they feature a 50:50 ratio of girls and boys in illustrations, as well as show women and girls in positions of authority, thus helping reduce stereotypes. (Please refer to *Annex B* for examples of current gender-transformative reading material and current gender-harmful reading material).
- The materials review will be conducted initially by the USAID/ACR Gender and Inclusion Specialist, together with the MEN counterpart Ms. Aminata Mbengue Thiaw. The USAID/ACR Gender and Inclusion Specialist will then train others (including counterparts at the MEN) to review all materials to ensure sustainability after the USAID/ACR work has ended.
- The sample worksheets from USAID's gender guide (RTI, 2015) will be adapted for use in Senegal to assess and monitor for gender-equitable language within reading materials.

- Currently in Senegal, no training modules exist for assessing reading materials for their gender responsiveness. A training module will be developed, adapted from USAID's guide (RTI, 2015), to teach how to assess reading materials for their messages on gender, using as examples current reading books. By using actual current classroom books, MEN units and technicians will develop the skills to assess gender responsiveness within current learning materials for reading.
- USAID/ACR will provide training for partner ARED on gender-transformative reading materials, reviewing past examples of gender-harmful reading materials produced by ARED. This will help increase their own awareness and capacities and ensure that they are better positioned to develop more gender-equitable materials themselves, such as when they are helping the MEN develop their national language curriculum and materials in other subject matters.
- In addition to assessing student reading materials for gender responsiveness, USAID/ACR staff will also work with our MEN counterparts to assess drafts of teachers' tools and guides for whether they are gender responsive, also drawing on the USAID guidance document (RTI, 2015). We will then help to make adjustments. It is important that USAID/ACR staff note their own blind spots in assessing gender depictions in materials and texts so that they can also provide this training and awareness to others. When teacher tools and guides are gender harmful, USAID/ACR staff will collaborate with MEN to revise the teacher tools and guides appropriately. Scripts for teachers will come with instructions and techniques for gender-responsive pedagogy for instance how to call on students to ensure that boys and girls are equally engaged.
- USAID/ACR will enforce the 1:1 student/book ratio, and guarantee that girls and boys receive the same quantities of reading materials under the program. The training provided to inspectors and directors will include the message that everyone is responsible for ensuring that materials are distributed equally, and that inspectors and USAID/ACR staff will monitor the ratios and use of books by girls and boys throughout the year.
- School directors will get additional training as supervisors on book management and how to ensure that teachers are respecting this equal distribution and use in their classrooms. Furthermore, in our analysis on book management (under Output 2.3) and dialogue (Output 2.4), we will ensure that maintaining the 1:1 ratio is a key objective of any updated book management policy.
- USAID/ACR will also promote use of books outside of classroom equally for girls as for boys. Once the MEN and schools establish the system for borrowing books (i.e. supplemental readers) from the classroom, teachers will be asked to check randomly, once every two weeks, to see that each girl and each boy has a book to read in her/his book bag. Complementing the 1:1 student/book ratio conducted in teacher and school director training will be work under Outcome 3 to promote the establishment of small or mobile libraries also for extra-curricular reading, and work with communities and

parents to promote the use of these resources equally by girls and boys.

Other specific activities will include:

- Participation of men and women in the Core Reading Team.
- Encouraging the participation of women in the Daara Advisory Group.
- Hosting a workshop with the Core Reading Team to create, review, and validate gender-sensitive tools for all materials that will be developed and distributed.
- Adding criteria to show characters in non-traditional gender roles and occupations, and characters with disabilities in active and participatory roles (see Annex B for some illustrations to use as gender-harmful and gender-transformative examples).
- Using materials to promote additional themes that are important to MEN and the Senegal ESSP. This could include girls' engagement in science and technology, boys and girls staying in school, female promotion to leadership positions, etc.

Output 1.2: Teachers' skills in evidence-based early grade reading instruction improved

The goal of the USAID/ACR gender strategy for Output 1.2 is to promote gender-sensitive teaching and whenever possible, also render reading instruction an act that promotes gender equality.

Activities under Output 1.2 will include:

- USAID/ACR will ensure that in addition to the teacher's guide developed under 1.1, all training for teachers will be gender sensitive and promote gender equality. For instance, demonstrating how to call on students randomly to ensure that boys and girls have an equal chance to be engaged.
- As part of the teacher training and as will be indicated in the teacher's guides, USAID/ACR will help ensure that teachers make use of small groups so that all students have an equal chance to practice reading. Often times, large classroom sizes can become incubators for inappropriate behavior or violence. USAID/ACR will also work with schools to deal with large class sizes, as having 80 students in a classroom challenges even the most seasoned teacher. USAID/ACR will draw on best teaching practices, such as interactive teaching, flexible use of whole-class, group and pair work, encouraging student questioning, and planning varying lessons (Westbook et al., 2013 cited in Sperling and Winthrop, 2016).
- USAID/ACR will also build on the best practices of USAID's EPQ project in Senegal, which was designed to support improvements in quality of teaching and learning in middle schools, including gender. USAID/ACR will draw on these best practices for training primary school teachers, adapting the '*Guide de bonnes pratiques des cellules genre*,' (RTI, 2014).
- USAID/ACR will also help promote the organization of remedial instruction for students

who need it most, including girls who generally have less time to study at home given their household duties.

- USAID/ACR will incorporate in teacher training (both in public schools or *daaras*) content relevant to gender equity and to the elimination of all violence in all classrooms.
- Excellent teacher training materials on gender have already been developed in Senegal (MEN, PAEF and Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione Allo Sviluppo); however, this training module has not been utilized to date in Senegal due to lack of budgets allocated to training. USAID/ACR will help adapt this module, as well as draw on the resources of CCIEF and the *Observatoire de Genre and Développement* in Saint Louis. These modules will include specific tools and skills (e.g., positive discipline techniques, equitable treatment of male and female students; adherence to professional standards and teacher codes of conduct) for strengthening classroom and school management, as has been shown to contribute to a better learning environment where girls and boys are more likely to learn equally. Teacher training based on praising effort and progress (Reichert et al.; Reichert and Hawley, 2014), with positive feedback, rather than corporal punishment or harsh words, will be encouraged. USAID/ACR will draw on Plan International's Building Skills for Life Project, which helped to equip teachers with knowledge of alternative classroom discipline (Reilly, 2014 cited in Sperling and Winthrop, 2016).
- Through teacher observation (see more below under I.3), school directors and inspectors will assess how well teachers are applying gender responsive strategies and actions in their classrooms. School directors and inspectors will identify "gender champions" among teachers who can help coach other teachers on gender-sensitive teaching methodologies in their own schools and during CAP cluster meetings. School directors and inspectors will also be able to nominate teachers to be recognized by the IEF or IA as consistently championing gender with a certificate of recognition for their efforts in the classroom and to provide coaching on gender to other teachers. This idea was endorsed by MEN officials in Kaolack and Kaffrine in May 2017 as part of the field work and consultations held by Ms. Rokhaya Diop.

Other specific activities include:

- When planning teacher trainings, ensure accessibility for women and nursing mothers. Take into consideration the needs of women when planning trainings that require overnight stays.
- Partner with MEN to ensure all teachers receive gender sensitivity and awareness training during teacher training.
- Incorporate a gender module in regional and departmental training of trainers.
- Encourage the recruitment of female trainers and female inspectors.
- Include gender training in pre-service CRFPE for student teachers.
- Incorporate a gender module in the trainings for cooperating daara instructors.

Output 1.3: Coaching and Supervision of early grade reading instruction improved

Under Output 1.3, USAID/ACR will integrate gender into coaching and supervision of early grade reading instruction in the following ways:

School directors, inspectors, and other trainers/coaching support agents participating in the program supported by USAID/ACR, will receive training and support on promoting gender sensitive approaches. These trainings will utilize the modules/training identified for the teachers, coupled with additional discussions on how directors, coaches and inspectors can help support teachers in the use of gender-sensitive pedagogy in the classroom. As will be done in the teacher training, these other educators and teacher support agents will explore their own gender norms and how these gender norms might impact their work with teachers and ultimately gender equality in the classroom and of their students. They will be asked to assess their own gender roles at home and barriers to promoting gender equality in the classroom. While no one can be forced to change their belief systems, the training will aim to help people recognize how their viewpoints may affect their professional roles and encourage a shift in behavior.

Other specific activities will include:

- Training school directors and mentor teachers in gender awareness to understand how gender affects teachers in the classroom.
- Training coaches and supervisors to monitor and ensure gender-sensitive teaching practices through classroom observation.
- Tracking the number and percentage of male and female teachers and school directors, IEFs, and teachers trained in gender sensitivity
- Reviewing observation forms and integrate gender assessment into the observation tools.
- In collaboration with Outcome 3, training school directors and IEFs to partner with AME and CGE to discuss issues in the home that affect student learning in the classroom; for example, the importance of sharing household labor equally between boys and girls.
- Encourage female participation in the coaching and supervision team.
- Include a gender training for coaches and supervisors in regional and departmental training of trainers and coaches.
- Assist IAs and IEFs in ensuring gender balance in coach lists.
- For classroom observation tools, USAID/ACR will help the MEN adapt key aspects of existing gender assessment tools for classroom observation in early reading programs and insert them into the teacher observation tools. For instance, evaluating whether teachers allocate equal time to girls and boys to read aloud in class.

Output 1.4: Early grade reading assessment improved

Under Output 1.4, USAID/ACR will promotes gender sensitivity and gender equality in assessment in the following ways:

- The current EGRA study protocol, to be conducted in 2017, 2019, and 2021 for USAID/ACR, includes a sample of five boys and five girls in each grade (first and second grades). This sex-disaggregated data will be analyzed in order to recommend any changes needed in programs and strategies to increase gender equality, so that boys and girls can both excel at reading.
- Through rolling assessment using LEMA sampling and, most likely, group administered learning assessments, USAID/ACR will help IEFs assess progress multiple times per year on a rotating sample of schools in each department on whether children are reading at grade level in the national language (Wolof, Pulaar or Serer) in which they are learning to read, disaggregated by sex. We will help the MEN further link progress on the gender equity of student results to the *Contrat d'Amélioration de la Qualité des Apprentissages des Ecoles* of *Inspecteurs d'Académies* (IA).

USAID/ACR will also ensure that assessment activities include the following:

- Gender-sensitive data collection tools, with indicators that are gender-relevant and that data is gender-disaggregated.
- Disaggregate data along other dimensions (age, geographic location) to better understand which students are at most disadvantage.
- EGRA: make an effort to ensure that female assessors are included in the team deployed to administer EGRA. Currently there are 69 men assessors and 27 women assessors, making up 27%.

B. Outcome 2: Delivery Systems for Early Grade Reading Instruction Improved

Output 2.1: Coordination and communication about early grade reading increased

Under Output 2.1, USAID/ACR will promote gender sensitivity and gender equality in supporting the MEN's public communications and coordination around early grade reading in the following ways:

- USAID/ACR will support the MEN to ensure that the Communication Strategy developed and implemented for the National Reading Program is gender sensitive. This will include promoting educator and parental and community support for non-discrimination in children's access to reading education based on gender, disability or any other factor. USAID/ACR will do this by promoting print, radio, and TV materials that have gender-responsive messaging. To ensure greater sustainability of these gender-sensitive communications, USAID/ACR will begin these efforts with training to MEN staff on how to create gender-responsive communications strategies.
- USAID/ACR's Gender and Inclusion Specialist, as a member of the Communications Subcommittee, will work with her MEN counterpart to monitor public communications around the National Reading Program for gender sensitivity, with

follow-up training for MEN staff as needed. USAID/ACR will also ensure that its own staff working on communications will be trained and coached to effectively provide on-going technical assistance to the MEN to produce gender-responsive communications.

- As part of USAID/ACR's ICT strategy, USAID/ACR will work with MEN to develop videos for TV to encourage parents to read to their children and include messaging on the importance of reading with both boys and girls. One suggested activity is to create a video contest whereby fathers can compete with each other (modeled on Ms. Math contests) for the amount of time and the innovative ways they teach their children to read. The video will note that the active role of fathers has been positively correlated with better educational outcomes for children (Jha and Pouezevara, 2016). The goal of this video would be to create new norms of masculinity so that fathers view their roles with their elementary-age daughters and sons as more than providing funds for school fees or supplies, but also that "to be a real man" is to appreciate literacy and the reading skills of both sons and daughters. Men of all walks of life, whether they are farmers or fisherman or otherwise, would participate, noting how reading helps them and can also help children.
- Another intervention would be for the *Association de Mères d' Elèves* (AME) to host a conversation for mothers talking about the importance of literacy for themselves and their children, and how they use their literacy skills. Mother and female caregivers have a noted impact on children's reading progress, not only when they can help children with reading skills, but even without being fluent readers they make an impact by checking with the child at home on their homework (which could be reading for a certain amount of time after school – 10 minutes at home or whatever it may be) to verify if they have done it and ensure they are expected to focus on it and finish it at home.
- USAID/ACR will involve the DEE counterpart, the *Réseau des Femmes Enseignantes* Leads/DRH and the DRH gender bureau in the national communications campaign with MEN.

Output 2.2: National standards for early grade reading adopted and applied

It is important that, for Output 2.2, USAID/ACR addresses gender in benchmarks and standards. Other gender interventions under Output 2.2 will include:

- As part of the research agenda, USAID/ACR will be developing reading benchmarks and standards in Wolof, Pulaar, and Serer. These will be based on baseline EGRA results and the expertise of the MEN, the USAID/ACR team, and relevant stakeholders. USAID/ACR will institutionalize a progress indicator for literacy skills for girls and boys, disaggregated by sex. This progress indicator in literacy will provide useful information to see if both boys and girls are making progress, or if mid-course corrections are needed and if these differ by sex. Through rolling assessment using LEMA, progress will be assessed multiple times per year on a

rotating sample of schools in each region of USAID/ACR on whether children are reading at grade level in the national language in which they are learning to read, disaggregated by sex.

- Encourage the assignment of female teachers to teach in the early grades, and of female trainers and inspectors to supervise reading instruction
- Encourage participation of both women and men in the task force on national standards development

Output 2.3: Research on early grade reading in Senegal produced and disseminated

It is important that, for Output 2.3., USAID/ACR promotes gender sensitivity in research and policy efforts. Gender efforts under Output 2.3 will include the following:

- Several studies planned could assist with policy formulation suggested in this gender plan, such as the teacher mobility study. This study has the potential to highlight where female teachers are more mobile than men and vice versa and for what reasons.
- For the planned study on teacher attitudes, knowledge, and practices (KAP) that will be conducted at project baseline, midline and endline, we will ensure that gendered elements are included in the research questions. For instance, with regard to teacher time on task (and in school), it has been reported that teachers do not stay for the required time in their classrooms, from 8 am to 1 pm each day, and then on Tuesdays and Thursdays, class resumes from 4pm to 6pm. In the teacher KAP, USAID/ACR will conduct a qualitative study to assess the following: to what extent do teachers fulfill these hours and is there a difference in patterns and time on task between male and female teachers? Are there transportation issues, and/or a lack of motivation that is different for male and female teachers? Do female teachers have an excess of domestic chores compared to male teachers? Findings of the study will be used to inform training and policy related to teacher presence and time on task.
- USAID/ACR's Community Literacy Support Plan will also address gender stereotypes and disparities and promote gender equality in education (required per F.6.4 Community Literacy Support Plan). While the TOR for the planned KAP did not originally include questions on gender, based on further discussions brought about by this gender plan, questions related to gender have been added to the TOR for the KAP and will be further elaborated as KAP questions are developed. To date, the TOR for conducting the KAP is still in progress and the KAP has not yet been conducted. Once the KAP has been conducted, the results will be used to inform gender-transformative activities to develop literacy support within communities as well as how to improve gender equality in the interests of improving reading skills of elementary school girls and boys.

- USAID/ACR will promote an increase in female teachers to teach throughout the school system, as well as in the early grades. USAID/ACR will also promote an increased number of female trainers and inspectors to supervise reading instruction. Studies have shown that teacher training is most effective when accompanied by a focus on improving the conditions in which teachers teach, providing teachers with continuous professional support, opportunities for training, and opportunities to gain further qualifications (Unterhalter, 2012 cited in Sperling and Winthrop, 2016). The strategy 2013 - 2025 of The Ministry of Education, through PAQUET-EF, has set the goal of increasing the level of women in leadership positions within the Ministry of Education by 20% (MEN, “Plan de responsabilisation,” 2014).
- Increasing the number of female teachers is important for the long-term achievements of girls and women within schools and communities. Not having a female teacher may be a barrier for girls to attend school. Increasing the education of girls will create a pipeline for future female teachers, which will in turn strengthen the enrollment and achievement of girls. These female teachers can then rise within the educational system to obtain leadership positions within the educational system. Increasing the number of female teachers during the five years of USAID/ACR can have long-term impacts on the well-being and literacy of Senegalese women. A study in Mozambique found that as more women in literacy courses continued studying, the dropout rate of girls from primary school was reduced (UNESCO, 2017).
- USAID/ACR staff will conduct gender training for MEN officials responsible for the policies of teacher deployments. The current policy requiring that new teachers have no choice as to where they will be posted during their first five years of teaching will then be reviewed to assess the impact of this policy on increasing the number of women teachers.
- If sufficient resources are available, USAID/ACR, together with the Gender Bureau of DRH (Direction des Ressources Humaines) and the Network of Female Teachers, Ministry of Education, will review the ongoing MEN collection of data on teachers and positions of responsibility within the education system to assess if MEN is reaching the goal of increased numbers of female teachers.

In addition, the following are research studies and questions that could be incorporated into the USAID/ACR research agenda, to inform gender-sensitive programming under USAID/ACR:

- Exploring the following questions as part of the language transition study: What are effective ways to increase learning among boys? Increase learning among girls? Do the methodologies to teach young children to read and to motivate young children to read differ by sex? Are language use patterns different for boys than for girls?
- USAID/ACR will, in selected schools, assess whether children have improved feelings of safety within schools. This assessment will be adapted from www.raisingvoices.org in collaboration with UNICEF.

- USAID/ACR will, in selected schools, assess whether school directors and teachers know what to do concerning incidents of violence within schools, as well as their knowledge on how to discipline in nonviolent ways, as well as what to do if violence breaks out between students in the classroom or school.
- A small-scale study in a number of schools, will assess the numbers of male and female teachers and note the barriers for women teachers. Numerous informants noted that women teachers do not have the power to move away from their family. USAID/ACR will engage program staff to brainstorm, in collaboration with teachers and communities, potential solutions to increase the numbers of women teachers while at the same time efforts are made at the national level to advocate for policies that will increase the number of women teachers.
- USAID/ACR will conduct small community-based studies to assess the amount of time girls and boys spend on reading outside of school, tracking this over the course of the next five years to see if reading time increases. Sex-disaggregated data with no identifiers of name or place will be collected. This data will be used in community dialogues on the need for both girls and boys to get adequate time for reading outside of the classroom.
- In addition, referral systems for SRGBV may be assessed and monitored, to ensure that children facing abuse either at home or in schools can obtain the health, legal, and counseling services required. These activities will be conducted in collaboration with UNICEF's ongoing work on SRGBV in Senegal.
- USAID/ACR will also consider the general USAID guidance (USAID, 2013a) on gender equality indicators and whether they have incorporated these in their work and indicators: "proportion of target population reporting increased agreement with the concept that males and females should have equal access to social, economic and political opportunities," along with the indicator, "percentage of target population that views GBV as less acceptable after participating in or being exposed to USG programming," as per USAID (2013a). Additionally, USAID/ACR can periodically access "the proportion of females who report increased self-efficacy at the conclusion of USG supported training and/or programming," as per USAID (USAID, 2013a).

Output 2.4: Policies in support of evidence-based early grade reading instruction implemented

It is important that, for Output 2.4., USAID/ACR promotes gender-sensitive policies in support of early reading instruction. Gender interventions will include:

- If sufficient resources are available, a workshop will be held for women teachers (*Réseau des Femmes Enseignantes* of the DRH of MEN) to exchange experiences and discuss how to increase women's empowerment within the educational system. Leaders of this workshop might include representatives from the *Université Cheikh Anta Diop Laboratoire Genre et Recherche Scientifique* and Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE)

(www.fawe.org). This female teacher network reinforces the professional status and sharing of female teachers who may need support and reassurance to stay in the job and handle majority-male workplaces. This, in turn, strengthens early teaching and learning for children, both girls and boys, emerging as readers in these teachers' classrooms. Increasing the ability of women to rise within the educational system will increase gender equality and give girls, currently learning to read, a future career path and role model to inspire them.

- USAID/ACR will promote gender sensitivity in MEN performance improvement efforts by measuring position, pay, and sex for teacher and supervisor positions. Supervisors, as well as teachers, will receive periodic tests assessing their knowledge of gender.
- Identify existing gender policies through consultations within the different structures of MEN in regards to absenteeism in early grades and teacher mobility
- The government of Senegal recognizes the importance of increasing the number of female teachers. USAID/ACR will work with the MEN to include recommendations of the study, "*Etude portant sur l'integration de la dimension genre et de la dimension sociale dans la guide du mouvement national du personnel de enseignement*," (RTI, 2014), into the MEN's *Guide du Mouvement* – the guide for teacher placement and transfer – and creating a mechanism of enforcement and accountability to go along with the changes to the *Guide du Mouvement*.
 - Some of the recommendations to be considered include allocating a percentage of open positions each year, across levels of responsibility, to women only and bonuses for women who are willing to assume teaching in rural areas.
- Work with IEF and IA gender bureau to facilitate dialogue and support between female teachers
- Campaign to encourage female role models and involvement in early grade reading improvements
- Work with MEN and DRH to pilot new incentives to increase women retention in the teaching field

Output 2.5: Ministry of Education staff's performance of essential functions improved

For Output 2.5., USAID/ACR will promote gender-sensitive MEN staff performance in the following ways:

- In the development of the Human and Institutional Capacity Development (HICD) evaluation tools to be used to assess the performance of key units with the MEN, USAID/ACR will help the MEN integrate into these tools – and, wherever possible, their performance contracts – indicators linked to gender sensitivity and equality. For instance, a key performance indicator could be how well they are promoting the hiring

and promotion of women in a given directorate.

- USAID/ACR will work with the MEN to support and provide guidance in the operationalization of the government gender strategy and policies
- USAID/ACR will provide technical assistance to ensure that all MEN branches understand the gender mandate and the necessary budget and actions needed to implement the activities. Whether a budget has actually been allocated by the Senegalese government to the gender-related goals of PAQUET-EF can be a metric for the project to show increased attention to gender within the education system.

C. Outcome 3: Parent and Community Engagement in Early Grade Reading Improved

USAID/ACR will promote gender sensitivity and equality across parent and community engagement efforts in the following ways:

- The Community Literacy Support Plan addresses identified gender stereotypes and/or disparities and reflect gender equality education (per Section F.6.4 Community Literacy Support Plan).
- USAID/ACR will also promote gender sensitivity in grassroots social behavior change communications (SBCC).
 - Further details on this approach are defined in the Community Literacy Support Plan submitted May 26th, 2017.
- Promoting gender sensitivity and equality in work with communities and community associations.
 - For example by ensuring that community engagement interventions incorporate principals of gender equality (e.g. addressing equality issues in engaging men and women caretakers of students) and encouraging women's empowerment.
- Promoting gender sensitivity and equality in work with families for at-home support to reading.
 - Working closely with parents and caregivers to promote learning reinforcements and activities in reading with early grade students – looking at the role of fathers and male caregivers in helping with reading homework.
- Local NGOs and selected local organizations will roll out activities with parents and communities. As needed, USAID/ACR will provide a gender awareness orientation session on the USAID/ACR Gender Plan to ensure that gender equality is integrated into all aspects of the activities and interventions. USAID/ACR will also integrate a gender criteria component when selecting local NGOs.
- USAID/ACR will include gender questions in the knowledge, attitudes, and practice

(KAP) surveys in communities. For example, we will ask questions on girls and boys reading practices at home and extracurricular activities, including which family member assists them with their homework.

Output 3.1: Parent and community demand for high-quality early grade reading instruction increased

USAID/ACR will promote gender sensitivity and equality across parent and community engagement efforts under Output 3.1 in the following ways:

- USAID/ACR staff will provide communities with gender-transformative social and behavioral change trainings, with messaging around the importance of gender equitable education. USAID/ACR will build on work of USAID behavior change communication efforts in Kaolack (RTI, 2016) to engage parents in a way that promotes gender equality. USAID/ACR will also collect sex-disaggregated data, analyzing the data for gender disparities and continually monitor to reduce gender inequalities.
- USAID/ACR will create gender sensitive community dialogues around early grade reading that also promote gender equality using participatory methodologies adapted from best practice models such as that of Tostan (Fernald and Weber, 2015), Save the Children (2014), Stepping Stone (Gordon, 2015; Welbourn, 2016, Jewkes et al., 2010) and others. These resources will be adapted to align with USAID/ACR needs.
- The organization of these community dialogues will apply evidence and lessons learned from the Tostan Community Empowerment Program, which UNESCO has recognized for its success empowering women through literacy programs (UNESCO, 2015). Tostan's community dialogues provide trainings that occur over a one-year period. When trained by Tostan, women also learn to read and write SMS text messages on mobile phones to practice their literacy skills. This project has led to increased school retention rates, especially among girls and improved literacy (UNESCO, 2015). USAID/ACR will discuss with Tostan their possible willingness to assist with trainings on gender for local NGO subcontractors.
- USAID/ACR will address gender-related impediments to learning in community outreach and awareness-raising campaigns through community dialogues to reduce the burden of household chores on young girls, stop the passing custody of young boys to itinerant *daaras*, and encouraging daily parental review and practice of reading with both boys and girls during out-of-school hours.
- Gender norms at the community level to support reading and learning for both girls and boys will be fostered through community dialogues. Community dialogues will emphasize the importance of free time for reading (without distraction of TV or other devices). The idea of community dialogues to encourage parents and household members to set aside time each day for reading, as well as reducing domestic chores for girls was also endorsed by officials of the Ministry of Education in Kaolack and Kaffrine in May 2017 as part of the field work and consultations for this gender plan.

Other specific activities will include:

- Integrating criteria based on gender in the criteria of choosing the 20% of school communities targeted by USAID/ACR.
- Encourage both parents (mothers and fathers) to assist children reading.
- Encourage elders (sisters and brothers to assist their siblings).
- Include gender questions in KAP survey.
- Sharing gender awareness messages through SBCC campaigns, such as encourage fathers to assist their children and reducing domestics chore for girls.
- Integrate gender aspect in the roundtables community and parental engagement to inform the community literacy plan.

Output 3.2: Community based early grade reading activities implemented

Under Output 3.2, USAID/ACR will promote gender sensitivity and equality in community-based early grade reading activities in the following ways:

- USAID/ACR will ensure that community engagement interventions incorporate principles of gender equality (e.g. addressing equality issues in engaging men and women caretakers of students) and encouraging women's empowerment. USAID/ACR staff will assess if women are active only in AMEs, PTAs, SMCs or all of the above to determine if women can speak openly at meetings besides those of AME. If, as has been traditional, women only speak at AMEs, and do not have a voice in the largely male-dominated PTAs or SMCs, then USAID/ACR will engage with both existing PTAs and the *Association de Mères d'Eleves* (AME) separately so that each can be heard. USAID/ACR will work with both groups to see if women can be present and be heard within the PTA. Parental participation in school events, class work or PTAs is an integral element to promote pupil performance (Azu et al., 2015).
- Other training manuals that have demonstrated effectiveness on gender-related outcomes that could be adapted by USAID/ACR include those by Promundo (Pulerwitz et al., 2006; Barker et al., 2005); and the Institute of Reproductive Health (Ashburn et al., 2016; IRH/Save the Children, 2013). USAID/ACR will ensure emphasis within community dialogues on the advantages of reading as well as the importance and the benefits of girls' education, while not neglecting boys. In fact, engaging boys in "girls' education" is one of the best ways to transform gender relations and norms from a young age. It is critical that boys be involved in sports clubs and reading clubs, both in single sex and co-ed groups, to learn the equal rights and capabilities of both girls and boys to achieve their human potential no matter what societal or cultural roles they have already absorbed from their surroundings. Single sex and co-ed clubs of this nature, especially sports clubs like these sponsored by CARE in various countries, can also be used as models for this type of gender-transformative activity.
- The Community Mobilization Grant Program will encourage grant applications for

community activities that support innovative ideas to promote gender equality in early grade reading, such as ways to reduce domestic chores borne by girls to better equalize reading time at home for girls and boys. Activities that involve women's groups with an empowerment approach to supporting early grade reading will also be favored in grantmaking.

- One of the recommendations of parents and communities gleaned from consultations and interviews outside of Dakar is to address the issue parents raise that they do not have the skills and abilities needed to help their children with reading. This approach will encourage communities to mobilize resources to provide literacy training particularly mothers and members of the AME, will be given literacy training as part of community mobilization. It is a central tenet of gender and education that there is a positive cycle perpetuated by a girl who is educated: "Educating women means that daughters are more likely to be educated as well" (McCracken et al., 2015, p. 43). While in communities conducting interviews, the USAID/ACR Gender Specialist was also able to meet with NGOs, such as World Vision, who are helping community members to read in a national language prevalent in that area. USAID/ACR can coordinate with these ongoing efforts to address this issue in a complementary way. As CCIEF has shared, trainings of mothers' associations through the PAEF-Plus program have begun in Kaolack, Kaffrine, and Fatick. USAID/ACR can harmonize in the areas where this type of training is underway.
- USAID/ACR's approach will also encourage community organization of small after-school study groups and girl-to-girl peer study groups as this approach has been proven to help increase girls' reading levels.
- We will also encourage community organization of after-school clubs to support reading and model gender equitable behavior. These clubs will be modeled after the work done by Save the Children's Choices curriculum (Lundgren et al., 2013), but adapted for younger ages in Senegal. Use of the Save the Children Choices Curriculum resulted in increased gender equitable attitudes among children, reduced control and dominance of boys over girls, reduced violence, and improved attitudes to girls' education (Lundgren et al., 2013).

Output 3.3: At-home support to early grade learners improved

Under Output 3.3., USAID/ACR will promote gender sensitivity and equality in work with families for at-home support to reading in the following ways:

- USAID/ACR will work to foster supportive networks for parents, with parents having a same-sex buddy within the group for mutual support (Jha and Pouezevara, 2016).
- USAID/ACR's supported approach for working with parents will emphasize that girls and boys, and their female and male caregivers, will work to adjust their traditional roles at home. Boys would undertake more domestic chores without having their masculinity called into question, and girls would spend less time on domestic chores so that they

have time to read. The idea of a balance in chores and a mutual and equal respect for both boys' and girls' time for reading can be established.

- Older siblings will be encouraged to practice reading with younger siblings in ways that aims to have both girls and boys succeed in learning to read. Our approach will encourage communities to recognize these efforts through appreciation ceremonies. The idea of encouraging older siblings to practice reading with younger siblings was also endorsed by communities in Kaolack and Kaffrine in May 2017 as part of the field work and consultations held for this gender plan.
- USAID/ACR will foster the role of mothers and fathers and female and male caregivers in helping with reading homework, which has shown positive associations in EGRA research (Mount-Cors, 2016; Education Development Center, 2017).). The idea of community mobilization to encourage fathers to read to their children was also endorsed by officials of the Ministry of Education in Kaolack and Kaffrine in May 2017.

Output 3.4: Parent and community monitoring of early grade reading instruction delivery improved

Under Output 3.4., USAID/ACR will promote gender sensitivity and equality in work with parent and community monitoring of early grade reading instruction delivery. This will be done in the following ways:

- Engage community leaders and parents in dialogues to address collaborative classrooms and extracurricular learning opportunities that include boys and girls, more flexible learning schedules to accommodate children's difficulties associated with school access, messaging around the importance of gender equitable education, etc.
- USAID/ACR's community outreach will emphasize the importance of parent-teacher communication and measure progress by including a benchmark assessing how many times the parent talks to the teacher and whether it is mother/father or both.
- Parent-teacher consultations will take place in the school, giving both the mother and father the opportunity to ask questions and answer questions asked by the teacher. This will be a discussion rather than the teacher simply sharing the grades of the student. The teacher will also share examples of ways to improve reading at home that can be done by either or both parents and encourage the same behaviors with boys and girls.
- Information on how reading can be increased at home will also be accomplished through community dialogues and community forums. Parents will be encouraged to reach out to teachers and inform teachers about issues related to their students and how their students are progressing with reading at home, or any particular challenges. During the dialogues and forums, data on reading levels will be shared and messages on the importance of continued parental support and gender equality at home and at school.

D. Cross-Cutting Components

1. ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies)

USAID/ACR will address gender in its ICT component by adjusting the schema of SMS communication to include a special SMS group that covers women teachers. Because there are fewer women teachers than male teachers, the goal of this additional SMS group is to ensure that women teachers feel less isolated. Women teachers will thus be able to have their own group of women teachers whereby they will be able to discuss freely among themselves. Discussions will vary but could include barriers and opportunities that they face in terms of gender issues and teaching primary school children to read, as well as their own advancement within the education system and others. This group will not be in lieu of the joint male and female teachers group, but an additional resource.

USAID/ACR will work with the *Division Radio Television Scolaire* (DRTS) to develop videos for television to encourage parents to read to their children and share messages on the importance of reading for both girls and boys.

2. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning

It is noted that USAID has specific requirements in terms of sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis. These requirements will be explained to all Senegalese partners, noting the importance of meeting USAID requirements concerning sex-disaggregated data, gender analysis, and increasing gender equality. A key metric is the numbers of women teachers and women in positions of authority within the Senegalese education system. This goal of increasing the number of females in the education system is shared by the Senegalese government, as noted in numerous policy documents.

USAID/ACR will ensure that all data is disaggregated by sex.

All USAID/ACR indicators will be disaggregated by sex appropriately to provide data for gender analysis. All training data will be disaggregated by sex and analyzed by gender as required by USAID. (C.7.2 Data Collection and Disaggregation in contract). USAID/ACR will follow the requirements on gender integration in performance plans and reports as laid out by USAID's 2013 guide, "How-to-note: Gender integration in performance plans and reports."

Some examples of sex-disaggregated indicators include:

- Number of boys and girls with access to in-school materials
- Number of books and teaching materials reviewed with MEN for gender-positive messaging
- Number of materials produced or provided with project funds that feature non-traditional gender roles in the subject matter

We also propose adding sub-indicators to the already existing indicators measuring the number of people trained globally and teachers found to be correctly applying techniques:

- Teacher training:
 - Number of teachers, school directors/coaches, IEFs who successfully completed

- gender-sensitive pedagogy training with USAID/ACR support
- Percentage of USAID/ACR-trained teachers observed to be employing gender-sensitive teaching techniques

USAID/ACR will conduct analysis of differences across sexes in data collected.

EGRAs will include sex-disaggregated data, with equal sampling of boys and girls. If there are sufficient resources, and if, through a gender analysis of EGRAs, statistically significant disparities are found in reading performance between boys and girls, USAID/ACR will assess causation and propose remediation. From previous assessment data from PASEC (2016), it is notable that girls performed at a lower rate than boys (though not statistically significant in reading according to PASEC) in both reading and math, this will be taken into account as well as location, socioeconomic status, and other intersectional factors. Disparities by sex will also be raised and discussed during annual and mid-year USAID/ACR performance review conferences conducted together with the MEN and various stakeholders.

3. Program Reporting

In the Annual Performance Report, USAID/ACR will report critical gender and women empowerment activities and dynamics over the year (required per F.6.14 Annual Performance Reports). Sex-disaggregated data will be collected by USAID/ACR in the schools where USAID/ACR is active for key indicators, according to international best practices, which will include the following: enrollment; attendance; retention/dropout; repetition; ability to read at grade level; (Global Partnership for Education et al., 2016) and through teacher reading tests.

E. USAID/ACR Team Gender Approach

The USAID/ACR approach is to adopt a “be the change” attitude to promote the idea that gender sensitivity and promotion of gender equality must start with USAID/ACR’s own team, and to the extent possible, with USAID/ACR counterparts at the MEN. This includes modeling gender equality within USAID/ACR’s extended team.

These strategies include promoting gender equity and women’s leadership within the staffing of the USAID/ACR team. At this point in the senior management of USAID/ACR in the Dakar office, there are three international hires who are women (COP, Outcome 1 Technical Lead, and Operations Lead) and two Senegalese hires who are women (Outcome 2 Program Director and Outcome 3 Technical Lead). The total numbers of female and male staff under USAID/ACR is not currently available as hiring is still ongoing. Efforts are being made to identify strong female candidates for other positions in both Dakar and for USAID/ACR’s zonal and regional areas.

In addition, all USAID/ACR staff will have gender training so that: 1) they can incorporate gender into their work and investigate their own gender awareness in their homes and in the work place; 2) they can be role models for others in MEN and partnering organizations; 3) USAID/ACR expects that all staff incorporate gender equality into their daily work, not solely the Gender and Inclusion Specialist. Gender training workshops for all USAID/ACR staff, key consultants, and MEN counterparts will occur at regular intervals. These trainings will serve to

show how gender can be effectively incorporated into all aspects of a project. In addition to the Gender and Inclusion Specialist, several other USAID/ACR staff have gender experience and will assist in facilitating and leading the trainings. All USAID/ACR research plans, activities, and materials will be reviewed to ensure gender responsiveness and equality. The team will draw upon existing resources, such as the Save the Children's Engendering Transformational Change Gender Equality Program Guidance Toolkit (2014), mentioned previously, as well as other materials noted in this document.

V. FURTHER ANALYSES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OUTSIDE USAID/ACR MANDATE

Throughout interviews during the in-country research, key informants often talked about gender issues that indirectly affect reading outcomes. These issues are also widely understood in research consulted for this gender plan to play a role in gender issues related to schooling. While the recommendations here are outside the scope of USAID/ACR, the USAID/ACR team would be remiss to not identify the additional gendered dynamics that could affect the program but for which USAID/ACR has no mandate or means to act.

School Facilities

Even though school facilities and resources are not directly addressed by USAID/ACR outputs, they include gender-critical implications that could impede USAID/ACR progress for boys and girls if not addressed. These areas can be community-involved pursuits, but cannot be taken on entirely by the community. Some of these school facilities and resources include latrines, libraries, water, enclosures, electricity, and school lunches. School facilities play a role in gender equality in schools: "Evidence shows that improvements to school sanitation facilities and access to water improves the attendance rate of both girls and boys..." (Adukia, 2014 cited in Sperling and Winthrop, 2016, p. 133). A recent report on elementary school facilities in Senegal found that a lack of latrines particularly discourages girls from attending school (MEN, 2016). World Bank statistics note that in Senegal, only 70% of rural schools have toilet facilities and less than 14% of rural schools have spaces for hand washing (WVB, 2013, cited I Azu et al., 2015). Lack of hand washing facilities can lead to increased episodes of illness and absences from school. Lack of latrines and privacy for girls is associated with school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) (UNESCO and UN Women, 2016; Global Partnership for Education et al., 2016). Many classrooms in Senegal also lack water, walls or electricity (MEN, 2016; Diop, 2017). In schools in Dakar, it was observed that there were not enough places for children to sit while studying in classrooms. Children were falling off of unsteady, dilapidated benches and jostling for position, conditions that can also lead to school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV).

In Senegal, libraries are also lacking: a review of 42 schools in 2014 found that only 5% of the schools had libraries and only 13% had reading corners available to students (Save the Children and World Vision International, 2015). Based on global data that is highly likely to be relevant to Senegal, girls are less likely to access reading materials at home unless there is some kind of library system (UNESCO, 2016). Some schools visited in Kaffrine as part of the consultations for this Gender Plan do not have enclosures and thus are not considered safe and secure in the Senegalese context. When schools are not secure, girls are most likely to suffer from school-

related gender-based violence (UNESCO and UN Women, 2016).

Nutrition

Although nutrition is not directly addressed by USAID/ACR outputs, it nevertheless includes gender-critical aspects that could impede USAID/ACR progress for boys and girls if not addressed. Nutrition plays an important role in a student's ability to learn. A lack of adequate nutrition for elementary school children discourages the ability to learn effectively (UNICEF Senegal, 2016): "There is substantial evidence, largely from randomized evaluations, (of) food-for-education programs... as effective strategies ...to create improvements in enrollment and attendance, especially among children from resource poor households" (Sperling and Winthrop, 2016: 130). For example, in Burkina Faso, a program that provided primary school students with lunch and take-home rations for girls, conditional on a 90% attendance rate, increased enrollment for both girls and boys by up to 6% (Kazianga et al., 2012; Krishnarante et al., 2013 cited in Sperling and Winthrop, 2016). In Senegal, not all schools have school lunch programs. As of the school year 2015-2016, the World Food Programme was to introduce food vouchers in all of the schools they supported in Senegal, which was a total of 1012 schools (WFP, 2015). (<https://www.wfp.org/stories/school-feeding-senegal-going-local>). WFP estimates 50 percent of the population of Senegal to be food insecure. According to field research conducted in Fatick for this gender plan, a mother whose daughter dropped out of primary school said that having a school lunch would have been a factor that would have helped her daughter stay in school. A member of the AME noted that when students are hungry, they do not do well in school (Diop, 2017).

USAID/ACR can address these issues within parental support for reading. UNICEF and other development partners are addressing these issues that may be outside of the scope of USAID/ACR financially and contractually, but are critically important to assure reading progress for boys and girls. USAID/ACR will assess if these development partners can add synergy on these critical gender issues in the particular geographic areas in which USAID/ACR works.

Child Protection

Child protection is not directly addressed by USAID/ACR outputs, but nevertheless includes gender-critical aspects that could impede USAID/ACR progress for boys and girls if not addressed. There is a need for the Ministry of Education to operationalize the policies, under development currently, to stop the abuse of boys, whose custody is assumed by itinerant *daara* leaders, and who receive limited educational opportunities (Human Rights Watch, 2014). While the criteria for USAID/ACR to choose *daaras* in which to promote early grade reading will not include these itinerant *daaras*, there is a need to foster the operationalization of policies against the exploitation and abuse of children.

Female Literacy

Female literacy rates (of females who are caregivers, not primary students) are not directly addressed by USAID/ACR outputs, but nevertheless include gender-critical aspects that could impede USAID/ACR progress for boys and girls if not addressed. USAID could encourage research to document the economic impact of women's literacy to advocate for more programs by the government for female literacy and to contribute to the literature on understanding why boys underperform in reading, building on the work of Jha and Pouezevara

(2016) and noting its relevance to the Senegalese context. Since research confirms that mothers' impact from birth through the early years on their children's reading progress is the most notable (Mount-Cors, 2016; EDC, 2017; LeVine, et al, 2012), USAID cannot neglect to raise the issue of increasing women's literacy capabilities so that children become fluent readers faster, and the multigenerational nature of building a culture of reading.

Women, who are less likely according to current national rates to be literate than men in Senegal, are also less likely to speak French, both of which can impede mothers' communication with their children's school and schoolwork. "Given low literacy skills, mothers are often unable to fulfill (their) role in children's learning, suggesting the need for effective literacy programs" (Azu et al, 2015:3). Having reading material in national languages will also assist parents, particularly women, to develop their own literacy skills and thus help their child to practice reading outside the classroom. Community-based literacy classes for parents could complement this effort.

School-Related Gender-Based Violence

School-related gender-based violence is not directly addressed by USAID/ACR outputs, but nevertheless includes gender-critical aspects that could impede USAID/ACR progress for boys and girls if not addressed. USAID/ACR must recognize that even if not an explicit output in the USAID/ACR framework, SRGBV is one of the three target areas in gender for the Senegalese government and is also a priority of gender efforts in schools for USAID. To that end, USAID/ACR has identified that UNICEF is a significant actor in Senegal in this area and can coordinate to establish what needs to be done in the early grades and in regards to early reading in relation to fighting SRGBV. USAID/ACR staff will be oriented on the materials developed by UNICEF to provide teacher training to reduce school-related gender-based violence in Senegal and will draw on the evidence-informed documented successful work of SASA's Good School Toolkit Program (Devries et al., 2015). USAID/ACR can post in each USAID/ACR school the UNICEF poster developed for Senegal noting that Senegalese law prohibits corporal punishment in schools and that children have a right to a life free of violence. USAID/ACR can also reach out to Together for Girls (www.togetherforgirls.org) to explore the possibility of a Violence against Children Survey in Senegal in order to raise the visibility of this issue at a national level.

UNICEF has also had a successful pilot project within Senegal to reduce SGBV (UNICEF, Senegal, 2016). The Spanish Committee for UNICEF contributed to the project on girls' education in Kolda, Senegal, from 2015 to 2016 in 187 primary schools and surrounding communities, with over 78,000 students. The project, which resulted in reduced incidence of violence during the one-year period, was the result of interventions based on a campaign for students, teachers and communities to reduce violence and to increase school success, both in public schools and in daaras. Members of the Association of Mothers of Students (Association des Meres d'Eleves, AME) were also trained, as were members of the PTA (Association de Parents d'Eleves, APE), CGE and other community leaders. This resulted in increased rates of school attendance overall, as well as attendance by girls. Project results included that more girls graduated at each grade level between first and fifth grade. While rates of girls' education improved, boys still had better overall educational results. Children were connected with civil authorities in case of violence through UNICEF Child Protection Officers. Girls were also

provided with hygiene kits, which included soap and a plastic basin. People were trained at the regional level on strategies for prevention of SRGBV. Teachers and school directors were trained in types of violence and their impact on school achievement (UNICEF Senegal, 2016a). UNICEF/Senegal was recently awarded funding by the Government of Canada to scale up this successful pilot project.

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ANNEXES

Annex A: Stakeholder Meetings

The following is a list of meetings and consultations held to inform the Gender Plan:

April 7, 2017: Gender and Inclusion Specialist, Ms. Rokhaya Diop met with Ms. Mary Boubou Siby, Conseillère technique Secrétaire Exécutive de Coordination des Interventions sur l'Education des Filles(CCIEF) and Coordinatrice PAEF

April 10, 2017: Ms. Jill Gay, EdIntersect Gender Specialist and Ms. Rokhaya Diop met with Ms. Aissatou Lena Sene, Inspectrice générale de l'éducation/Chef de la Division de la Formation (*Direction de la Formation et de la Communication*), Ms. Ndeye Khady Diop Mbodj, Directrice de l'Enseignement élémentaire au Ministère de l'Education nationale (DEE), Mr. Cheikh Beye, Inspecteur de l'Education et de la Formation (DEE), Mr. Moussa Faye, Inspecteur de l'Enseignement Elémentaire, Ms. Aminata Mbengue Thiaw, Présidente de l'Association des femmes du Ministère (AFMEN), Ms. Sokhna Diop, Bureau protection de l'enfant (DEE), Ms. Aminata Ndoye Seck, Psychologue conseillère en orientation scolaire et professionnelle/Chef de division promotion sociale et genre (DRH, MEN), Ndeye Bineta Camara, Responsable du bureau genre DRH

April 11, 2017 : Ms. Jill Gay and Ms. Rokhaya Diop visited daara El Hadji Falilou Mbacke in Dakar and held a meeting with Ms. Moussa Niang, Enseignement Apprentissage Inspection des Daaras, Mr. Adama Seck, Secrétaire général de la fédération nationale des associations des maitres coraniques, Mr. Fallou Sarr, Division enseignement apprentissage à L'inspection des Daaras, Mr. Daoudo Diao, Président de l'association des parents d'élèves.

Ms. Gay and Ms. Diop also met with UNICEF's Ms. Amandine Bollinger, HIV Specialist/Protection/Care/Support of Children Affected by AIDS, Ms. Jennifer Hoffman, Ms. Inge Vervloesem, WCARO Education Specialist (Quality and Learning), Mariavittoria Ballotta, WCARO ECD Specialist, Mamadou Lamine Sow, Education Chief for UNICEF Senegal, Paola Babos and Kimberly Davis, both WCARO Gender Unit Specialists.

April 12, 2017: Ms. Gay and Ms. Diop visited IEF Dakar Plateau and met with Mr. Samba Diallo, Education Inspector, Inspectrice Ms. Adam Guene Diop, Inspector Ababacar Seck, and Ms. Khady Kane Diallo, Professor and Gender Bureau Coordinator.

Ms. Gay and Ms. Diop also visited the Djaraf Ibra Paye Ex Manguier primary school where they interviewed Mr. Niokhor Diouf, school director, and Ms. Samba Maguette Sow, CI teacher.

Annex B: Gender Review of Illustrations in Texts and Materials

Annex B: Gender review of illustrations in texts and materials

Gender-Harmful Pictures

Picture A: Drawing from French grammar book in use in April 2017 at a public school in Dakar, Senegal.

This depiction shows a woman who is serving food to her children. The boy and girl have a TV hovering over them with no reading material anywhere.



Picture B: Gender training drawing.

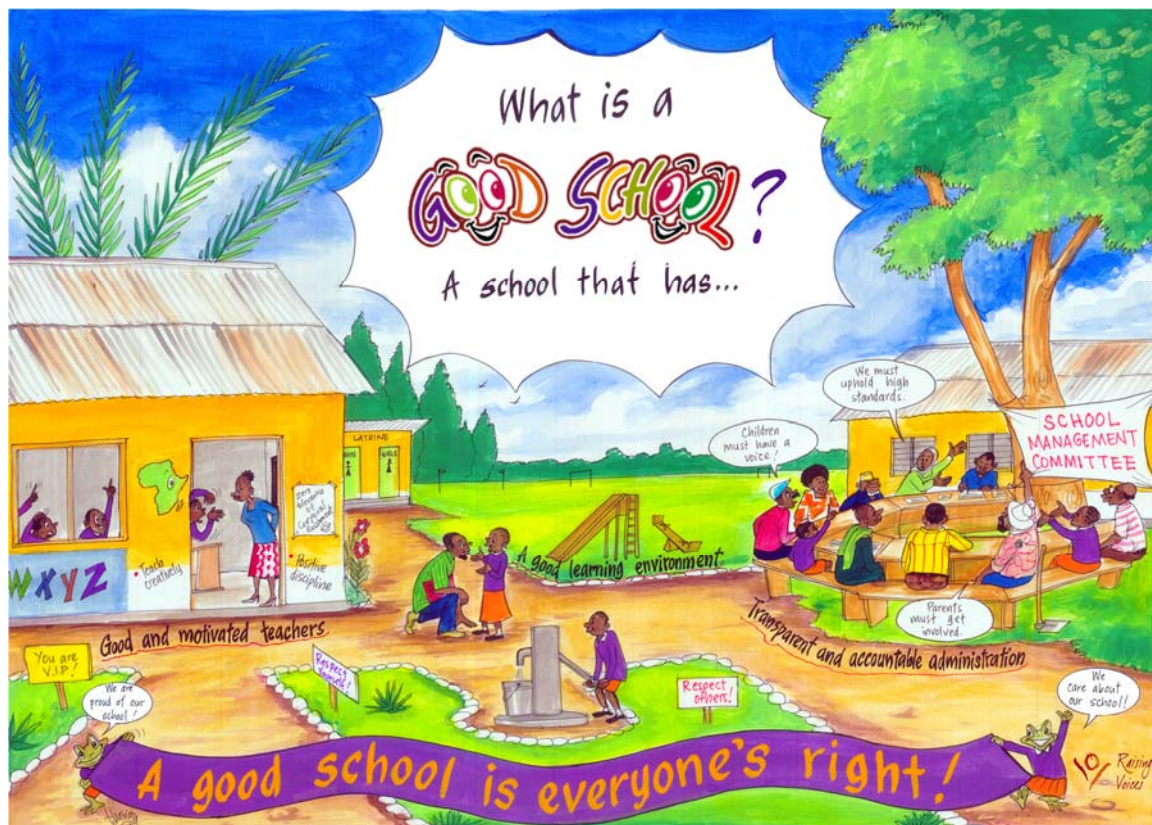
This is from a gender training done by MEN in Senegal (SOW, 2016). In this depiction, the role of women is captured, which often entails how women are asked to do everything with no resources and no time for themselves. Women are expected to carry water, carry firewood, take care of the sick, the children, feed every one, and also give their free time to schools. This is one reason the USAID/ACR Gender Plan is suggesting emphasizing the role of men as well as the role of women in teaching children to read.



Gender-Transformative Pictures

Picture C: Good Schools Drawing

This is a gender transformative illustration from the Good School Toolkit (Devries et al., 2015), which was shown in a randomized trial to reduce violence in schools in Uganda through resources provided by Raising Voice, www.raisingvoices.org. This shows the right to education, men teaching children, a parent school management committee where both men and women speak up, the principles of transparent and accountable administrations, separate latrines for boys and girls that are private and lock and boys pumping water.



Picture D: Illustration from a math textbook that is in use in April 2017 at a public school in Dakar, Senegal.

This depiction is gender transformative, showing a girl running and competing.



Annex C: Sample Questionnaire for Consultations

USAID/ACR Gender Planning **Draft questions for up-country gender consultations** **April 17, 2016**

Overview: Ms. Rokhaya Diop, Gender and Inclusion Specialist for USAID/ACR will conduct field visits in Kaolack to inform the Gender Plan and strategies. This site visit includes classroom observations and interviews at Ibrahima Fall primary school, in class CP.

School name: Ibrahima Fall

IA :Kaolack

IEF:Kaolack Commune

Classe: CP

- Observe the elementary school classroom in action
 - a) How many boys?
 - b) How many girls?
 - c) Do teachers encourage both sexes to speak?
 - d) Do teachers encourage both sexes to read?
 - e) Do teachers encourage both sexes to learn?
 - f) What are the reading materials?
 - g) Are they gender responsive?
 - h) Not gender harmful?
- For Daara Classrooms in addition:
 - a) How many hours of required learning on reading?
 - b) Times for reading? Every day?
 - c) Supplies?
 - d) Different roles for boys and girls?

Teacher Interview Questions

- a) Have you had training on gender?
- b) If so, what did you learn?
- c) Do you get evaluated based on your knowledge or practice in gender?
- d) What does “gender” mean to you?
- e) Is there a rule here against corporal punishment?

- f) What do you do to reduce possibilities of gender-based violence at your school?
- g) What outside your classroom would reduce the possibility of gender-based violence at your school?
- h) Is there a mechanism of accountability to discourage corporal punishment and school-related gender based violence (SRGBV)?

Inspector Questions

IEF:

IA:

- a) How do you promote learning for students in the schools you are responsible for?
- b) How do you promote gender-responsive actions in daaras?
- c) What are the mechanisms of accountability for teachers?
 - i) Teacher attendance
 - ii) Teachers getting to work on time

Teacher Training Observation

- a) How many elementary school teachers at the training are women?
- b) Is training provided on gender?
- c) What is included in this training?
- d) Is there support provided for women teachers?
- e) What could be included in this training that would address gender dimensions that aren't being discussed here?

Professional Association for Women Teachers Questions

- a) How many elementary school teachers are women? Men?
- b) Why are there fewer female than male teachers?
- c) What does your organization do to increase the number of women teachers?
- d) Is the educational environment safe (about the risk of gender-based violence)?
- e) Is the educational environment culturally adapted for girls/women?

Parent Questions (for individuals, PTA members, CGEs, and AME)

- a) What are your goals for your daughters?
- b) What are your goals for your sons?
- c) What household chores do the girls in your home do? What household chores do the boys in your home do?
- d) How much time does it take for girls to complete their chores?

- e) How much time does it take for boys to complete their chores?
- f) How much time do you allow your daughters to read and learn at home? How much time do you allow for your sons/boys to read and learn at home?
- g) How much time do you spend reading at home?
- h) To your girls?
- i) To your boys?
- j) Who else in your household reads to your child?
- k) Practicing reading with your child?

If you have a chance to talk with a parent of child who dropped out of school, add these:

- a) Why did your child drop out?
- b) Was it a boy or girl?
- c) What would be helpful to change that would keep your girl in school?